ROCKET BOOSTERS!
2
Celebrating 35 Years Of Nova!
Featuring Articles & Artwork By Comic Pros & Nova Fans!
Includes Three Pages From An Unpublished New Warriors Story!
Original Stories Told By Fans!
Sketchbooks! Interviews! Extras!
Proposals & Drafts!
Plus Much More!
Original Nova Mini-Marvels!

Foreword: Super-Nova by Fabian Nicieza

I told Doug I shouldn't be writing this foreword. So many others would be more appropriate. You see, I didn't like Nova. There, I said it. I don't know if I ever said it before, but I'll say it now. When his title launched, I thought it was a lame Peter Parker/ Spider-Man riff. I thought it wasn't "cool" and since I was around 15 or so, I wanted to only read cool superhero comics. Like stuff by Jim Starlin or Steve Gerber, Chris Claremont's X-Men and Steve Englehart's Avengers. Nova seemed too pedestrian for me. So I got a few issues, that was that. I got the last few issues of Fantastic Four (since I liked what Marv Wolfman was doing with the FF even if I didn't like Nova). Then Rich Rider and Nova disappeared and I didn't much care.

Fast-forward to 1989 and I'm begging to be named the writer on New Warriors. It took a little while for Danny Fingeroth to make up his mind. No one can delay a decision like a comic book editor with time to make a decision! So in the months I waited for an official announcement, I had planned and prepared, read all appearances by all of the characters who would be appearing in NW. Marvel had this great overgrown closet called the "Archives" where bound volumes of their titles were stored, like a library. Now plenty of bound volumes had been stolen over the years, but the entire Nova run was there, so I read it. And I gained an appreciation for the character and for the craft Marv, John and Sal Buscema brought to the title. I was older and just slightly more mature (not much), so I could see all the good stuff there without the silliness of looking for "cool stuff."

But more than that, it gave me such a strong foundation for what made Rich Rider such an interesting character, that it confirmed the gut call I had already made in my mind -- to start him from a place of personal failure and dissatisfaction with his life -- would help make the perfect heroic arc for Rich as he reclaimed his sense of self and his heroic stature. I caught flak from old-time Nova readers -- including fellow professional Erik Larsen -- but honestly, none of it phased me, because I knew who Nova was. I knew who Rich Rider was. And I knew that New Warriors would -- little by little -- help get him there. Even then, I saw the books I was writing and the characters in them through "future vision goggles" -- not overly concerned with a per issue perception because I was trying to think in 5 year chunks. So we withstood the early complaints of fans who said "this isn't Nova" because I knew he would be. Given time.

And slowly, little by little, we built Rich Rider back up. Honestly, I didn't rebuilt him to the point I saw for him -- that didn't happen until DnA's excellent work with the character in the last 10 years. Although I haven't followed every appearance in the last couple years, I did read the Annihilation TPBs including his last solo series, and that's when I smiled because I saw that the long, hard road Marv had started for the character, one I admittedly threw difficult roadblocks in front of, had been achieved.

Nova is a true hero. It took me a while to realize that. Then having done so, it took a while for others to see that. And it took a long time for Rich Rider to see that. I think he does now. I think readers of the Marvel Universe do as well. It only took 35 years. Just imaging how exciting the next 35 years can be for the character...

Table of Contents

Rocket Boosters #2

Celebrating 35 Years Of Nova

1. Foreword - Fabian Nicieza

Nova 1976 – 1981

4. Nova - George Perez & Bruno Hang
5. The Man Called Nova - Doug Smith
12. One Minute Later - Mark Morales
13. One Minute Later - Al Milgrom
14. Mini Marvels - Doug Smith & Josh C. Lyman

Nova 1989 – 2005

15. Marvel Comics Presents Pitch - Erik Larsen
43. Ron Frenz Kid Nova Sketchbook
44. Nova & The New Warriors - Ben Morse
46. Unpublished New Warriors Pages
49. Nova Space - Chris Marrinan
52. The New Defenders Pitch - Joe Bennett
54. New Warriors Design Sketches - Steve Scott
56. New Warriors v2 Original Pitch - Jay Faerber

Nova 2006 – 2011

65. Nova Design Sketches - Chris Batista
66. Nova Profile - Wil Ecolango
67. Annihilation Design Sketches - Scott Kolins
68. Original Proposal for Nova - Abnett & Lanning
70. Q&A with Dan Abnett & Andy Lanning
71. Nova - Geraldo Borges
72. Rappin' With The Rosemann
73. Nova in Battle - Chris Anderson
74. Nova in Space - James Bukauskas
75. Mini Marvels - Doug Smith & Bukshot
76. Nova Corps Design Sketches - Kevin Sharpe
77. As The WorldMind Turns - Darren Blackburn
82. Nu-Xandar - Doug Smith
83. Nova Design Sketches - Timothy Green
84. Nova - Timothy Green & Darren Blackburn
85. Many Loves of Richard Rider - William Meneese
87. Interview with Paul Tobin
89. What About That Time? - Doug Smith

Nova Bonus Features!

11. NovaFlix Ad
45. New Warriors DVD Boxed Set
51. Power Lock Ad
64. Rich Rider on HeroesHub
86. Human Rocket Cologne
92. Nova 619 Sample Pack - Darren Blackburn
99. Nova: The Next Generation - William Meneese
102. Cosmic Joke - Israel Huertas
106. Interview with Nova - Don Lund
109. Nova, This Is Your Life! - Corey Blake
115. Afterword - Tom Brevoort

ROCKET BOOSTERS!
Featuring Articles & Artwork By Comic Pros & Nova Fans!
Includes These Pages From An Unpublished New Warriors Story!
Original Stories Told By Fans!
Sketchbooks! Interviews! Extras!
Proposals & Drafts!
Plus Much More!
An Original Nova Mini-Marvels!

Rocket Boosters #2
© 2012 - Doug Smith

Nova and other Marvel characters mentioned and the distinctive likeness(es) thereof are Trademarks of Marvel Characters, Inc. Copyright © 1976 - 2012 Marvel Characters, Inc. All Rights Reserved.

The Star, Black Nova, Super Adventures logo and artwork are Trademarks of Marv Wolfman and are used with permission. © 1966 - 2012 Marv Wolfman. All Rights Reserved.

Articles and artwork are copyrights of their respective authors and artists and are used with permission. This magazine is free and should not be sold for profit.

Rocket Boosters #1 is still available on the Nova Prime Page

www.novaprimepage.com/fanzine.asp

WELCOME TO ROCKET BOOSTERS 2

Hi! My name is Doug Smith, publisher of (and one of many contributors to) Rocket Boosters, a fanzine devoted to Marvel Comics' ultimate super-hero; Nova!

35 years since Nova's first appearance?!? Wow! And to think that I almost didn't pick it up because Nova's helmet freaked me out! There was a movie called Phantom of the Paradise that I saw in 1976 (I was 12) and it gave me the heebs. The main character wore a helmet that, to me, was similar to the one I saw on Nova. Thankfully, the cover was so well designed and fantastic that I decided to look through it and was instantly hooked.

In this issue celebrating Nova's 35th anniversary, you'll find articles from other Nova fans and comic book professionals on how the Human Rocket affected them. You'll also find fantastic artwork, original stories, interviews and even some fun extras! That includes design sketches, original pitches and drafts involving Nova!

I'm also very proud to announce that Marvel has given me permission to reprint three pages from an unpublished New Warriors story done around 1993! Plus, Tom Brevoort graciously provided the 28 page Nova proposal submitted by Erik Larsen for Marvel Comics Presents back in 1989!

I'd like to thank all the people who volunteered their time and considerable talents to this fanzine. From all of the comic professionals to all of the great Nova fans who were very generous with their help, talents and contributions to the magazine.

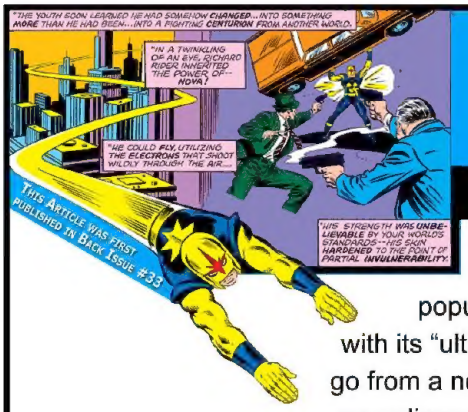
And in case you're wondering why this is out in early 2012 instead of 2011 for the 35th anniversary, the answer is the same as to why volume 1 came out in 2007 instead of 2006.

The intent was to have them out come in their respective anniversary years. However, during the creation of the fanzines, news came out of a new Nova series/big upcoming role early the following years. In order to try and launch the fanzines around the same time, I decided to push back both of the release date by a few months. I hope you find it worth the wait!

With Marvel relaunching the Nova concept in the form of Sam Alexander in Avengers vs. X-Men and the Ultimate Spider-Man animated series, this fanzine gives us the opportunity to look back at the 35 year career of Richard Rider: The Man Called Nova!

Doug

GEORGE PEREZ .09
+
Bruno Hang


"THE YOUTH SOON LEARNED HE HAD SOMEHOW CHANGED...INTO SOMETHING MORE THAN HE HAD BEEN...INTO A FIGHTING CENTURION FROM ANOTHER WORLD.
"IN A TWINKLING OF AN EYE, RICHARD RIDER INHERITED THE POWER OF--NOVA!
"HE COULD FLY, UTILIZING THE ELECTRONS THAT SHOOT WILDLY THROUGH THE AIR...
"HIS STRENGTH WAS UNBELIEVABLE BY YOUR WORLD'S STANDARDS--HIS SKIN HARDENED TO THE POINT OF PARTIAL INVULNERABILITY.
THIS ARTICLE WAS FIRST PUBLISHED IN BACK ISSUE #33

Flashback: A Look At THE MAN CALLED NOVA

by Doug Smith

In 1976, before Star Wars and Star Trek: The Motion Picture made science fiction popular with mainstream audiences, Marvel Comics began blazing the cosmic skyways with its "ultimate super-hero" in The Man Called Nova. For the rest of the decade, Nova would go from a normal high school student to planet-saving hero and end up going full-circle back to an ordinary teenager by 1981. However, it's the journey Nova took in that circle that made him one of the best characters to come out of the 1970s.

A Star Is Born:

However, just as in the real universe, there can't be a Nova without a Star. The saga of Nova began ten years earlier in 1966 with a black and white fanzine called Super Adventures. This superhero publication was being published by Dave Herring with articles contributed by a young writer named Marv Wolfman.

In Super Adventures' third issue and Wolfman's first as publisher, a new hero named the Star made his first appearance. The Star was a creation of Marv Wolfman and his friend and fellow comics enthusiast Len Wein. In the story, a man named Denteen comes across the crashed spaceship of Kraken Roo, an alien from the planet Orion 2. Inside the ship, Denteen discovers a machine which creates pills that grants super-powers to anyone who takes them for five minutes. With these pills and a costume with a five-pointed symbol on its chest, Denteen became the Star.

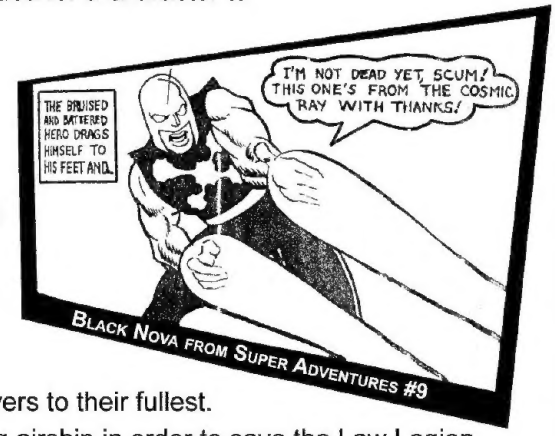
The new hero found himself with a wide variety of powers including flight, laser vision, energy absorption, teleportation and the ability to create illusions. He could also project energy blasts, radioactive gas and freeze beams from his hands. With these powers, the Star fought a variety of villains both solo and with a group of super crime fighters called the Law Legion.

The subscribers to Super Adventures received a special bonus when the sixth issue arrived in their mailboxes. Along with the normal fanzine came an offset publication. In this supplement entitled "Who Can Defeat A God?" Wolfman and Wein gave the Star a major overhaul!

The story featured the return of Kraken Roo who was now an all-powerful being called The Celestial Man. During his battle with the Law Legion, Legionnaire Cosmic Ray and the Celestial Man exchange power bursts and the resulting collision bathed the Star in energy and split him into two beings. The leader of the Law Legion, the Brain, changed one into a new being while Celestial Man absorbed the remaining Star. This new being created by the Brain now had all of the powers of the pills permanently minus the power of flight (replaced with a pair of flying "sky skates"). With this change came a new name and costume as the Star became Black Nova.

The evolution of the superhero involved both Wolfman and Wein. "I had wanted to change the character. My friend, Len Wein, and I discussed the changes and I believe I came up with the idea for a character to be called Black Nova. Len came up with the costume." recalls Wolfman.

The costume designed by Len Wein was a sleek dark blue and yellow skin-tight suit (which appeared black and white due to the format of the fanzine) with five connected starbursts on the chest and a golden helmet with antennae. Wein remembers that "an element of Black Nova's original mask was inspired by a one-shot Doctor Strange villain called Tiboro. I really like the idea of a helmet that covered the character's upper lip. The rest of the costume was just trial and error, I'm afraid."



BLACK NOVA FROM SUPER ADVENTURES #9

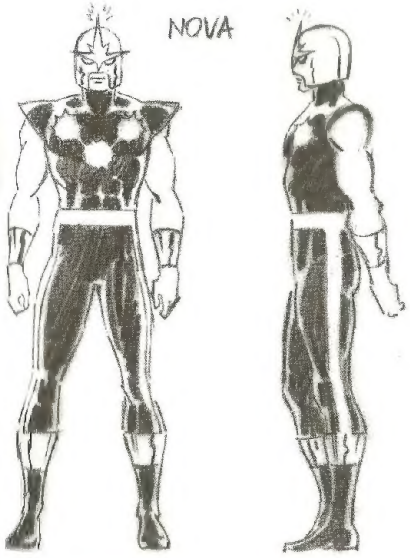
Unfortunately, Black Nova wasn't around long enough to use his new powers to their fullest. In Super Adventures #9 (1969), Black Nova sacrificed his life in a crashing airship in order to save the Law Legion.

Rebirth:

Seven years later, Marv Wolfman had become a successful professional in the comic book industry and had advanced his way to the position of Editor-In-Chief at Marvel Comics. While in this position, Wolfman decided that Marvel needed to go in a new direction. In his foreword to the Nova fanzine Rocket Boosters (2007), he wrote; "I wanted to return to the spirit of the old Spider-Man and Fantastic Four books, the ones that were aimed at the younger readers rather than the older ones. I was already writing Tomb of Dracula, a book written squarely for the older readers, and felt as a company we were inadvertently moving away from what was then the younger fan. There should be comics, in my view, that appealed to everyone, but we were in danger of abandoning the very people we needed to grow into long-term readers who would continue to follow the books into their 20s and beyond. So I believed Marvel needed an entry level comic. And I wanted it to be written with as much care and fun as I could. The Man Called Nova was it."

Former Marvel Editor-In-Chief Jim Shooter was an Associate Editor at the time and recalls Wolfman's passion for the project. "I don't remember what brought about the opportunity to launch a new character/title--probably some other title was cancelled and Marv talked the brass into letting him replace it with something new. I know he gave a lot of thought to what made Peter Parker work and tried to develop an alter ego and supporting cast that had the same kind of presence and appeal. I know he wanted Rich Rider to be much more of an average guy, as opposed to brilliant Peter Parker."

Nova's creator elaborates on some of the details; "The book occurred because I was leaving my EIC job and got a contract for writing. Rather than take books from others I created my own. Nova, Skull, etc. The Dracula mag for instance was the equivalent of 2-3 books in writing. I did the same at DC with Titans. Jim is right (in that) I did analyze why Spidey worked-same reasons why Archie & Jughead work and tried to duplicate the thought process but obviously not the character."



But Wolfman still felt the new Nova character wasn't quite ready. Although Nova's new identity of Richard Rider and his world were developed in his creative mind, he believed the original Black Nova costume needed some updates. "I wanted the costume simplified. It was very striking but fannish; antennae on the head, too many starbursts on the chest, overly cluttered, etc. I also wanted a starburst on the back. John (Romita) was the in-house designer at the time and I asked him. The original was about 80% there but I needed to make it sleeker." To finalize Nova's look, Marv Wolfman was inspired by the cartoon character Mighty Mouse and added a comet streak to his new character's flight visual.

As the book neared publication, one thing was bothering Wolfman – the title of the series. "Nova sounded too feminine to me so I asked Stan (Lee) for an idea and he suggested The Man Called... It was perfect so I used it."

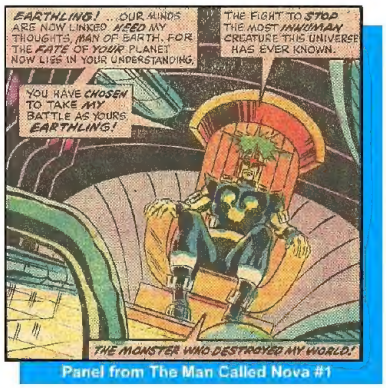
Nova Explodes On The Scene:

With all the pieces in place and the title now satisfactorily masculine, The Man Called Nova #1 (Sept. 1976) hit the stands. With fantastic art by John Buscema, the comic gave readers everything they expected in a first issue back in the 1970s; the hero, his supporting cast, a huge fight, and his origin!

And what an origin it was! From the depths of space, a large starship containing a dying alien warrior Rhomann Dey of the planet Xandar, found its way to Earth in pursuit of the planet's destroyer Zorr. After Dey realizes he won't be able to continue his fight, the Xandarian transfers his powers to an unsuspecting human in the form of Richard Rider.

Rider was an average teenager living in New York and had a serious lack of self-confidence. On the one side, Rich Rider had his two best friends, Bernie Dillon and Roger "Caps" Cooper, and his girlfriend, Ginger Jaye, to help bolster his self-esteem. Unfortunately on the other side, he was constantly bullied by the school jock and top honor student, Mike Burley.

It was during an altercation between the two at Uncle Fudge's Ice Cream Parlor that Richard Rider's life would be changed forever. After being knocked to the ground by Burley, Rider was struck by an energy beam sent by Dey and was immediately put into a coma while his body adjusted to the new power.


EARTHLING! ...OUR MINDS ARE NOW LINKED. NEED MY THOUGHTS, MAN OF EARTH, FOR THE FATE OF YOUR PLANET NOW LIES IN YOUR UNDERSTANDING.
THE FIGHT TO STOP THE MOST INHUMAN CREATURE THIS UNIVERSE HAS EVER KNOWN.
YOU HAVE CHOSEN TO TAKE MY BATTLE AS YOURS, EARTHLING!
THE MONSTER WHO DESTROYED MY WORLD!
Panel from The Man Called Nova #1

After regaining consciousness and returning to his normal routine, the young hero-to-be was thinking about Dey when the Nova powers exploded from inside Rider's body (along with the costume) and Nova was born! After enthusiastically testing his new powers around the city, Nova discovered his helmet could pick up radio transmissions from the police band and learned that Zorr was attacking the city. A brief but intense battle ensued until Zorr suddenly disappeared! At the end of the issue, Rich Rider decided to accept his responsibilities as a hero and the role of Nova.

With the character and his story now introduced to the readers it was time to, as they say, bring on the bad guys! The next two issues introduced three major enemies to the Nova mythos; Condor, Powerhouse and Diamondhead. Collectively and informally known as 'The Terrible Trio', they were united against another who would become Nova's greatest foe.

The Man Called Nova #2 (Oct. 1976) featured the Condor, a winged flying genius whose goal was to become the top crime lord in New York. However, that goal was not an end to itself. He wanted to use the position to amass great wealth to fight his foe known only as 'The Dreaded One'. His unwilling partner-in-crime was a young amnesiac man named Powerhouse. He had the ability to absorb all forms of energy to use as a weapon or drain his opponent into unconsciousness.

Nova's third issue saw the arrival of the final character in the 'Terrible Trio'. A former boxer who was turned into living diamond during a lab heist, Diamondhead had incredible invulnerability and was even stronger than Nova himself. Diamondhead shared the Condor's intense fear of the 'Dreaded One' and the three formed a partnership against their common foe at the end of The Man Called Nova #3 (Nov. 1976). Although the battles between Nova and the Condor and Diamondhead ended in stalemate along with Powerhouse's defeat, the ongoing conflict would carry itself through the first year of the series.

This issue also saw a change in artists as the penciling chores went from one Buscema to another. John Buscema was needed on other Marvel titles and Marv Wolfman approached his brother Sal to take over the series. Wolfman recalled that "I loved working with John and felt he could give the look I wanted. After John left, Sal became available. I loved Sal's stuff and loved working with him on many, many assignments, but actually don't think his Nova was the best stuff he did." For his part, Sal Buscema felt Nova was a pretty standard Marvel character. "Well, you know, Marv's a good writer. I enjoyed working with him. As far as the character is concerned, I thought it was a good character. I didn't think it was a terribly unique character but, you know, it's very difficult to characterize this because I worked on so many of the Marvel characters."

If Nova thought his fight against Diamondhead was tough, it paled in comparison to his next opponent – Thor! In The Man Called Nova #4 (Dec. 1976), the God of Thunder's mind was taken over by the chemical touch of a new Nova foe, the Corruptor. During a brief but intense battle, it was revealed Nova's uniform was also a functioning spacesuit complete with a fifteen minute air supply. Following the inconclusive fight and Thor's return to normality, the two heroes team up to take down their mutual enemy and part as friends.

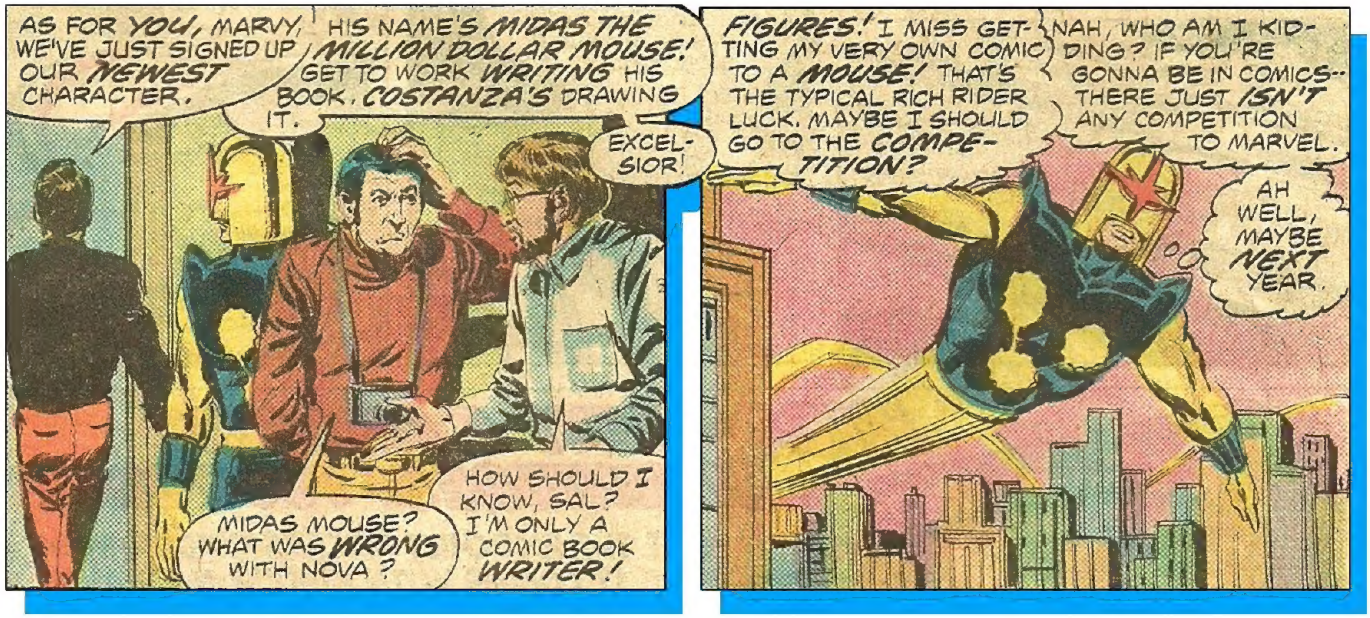
Even battling a god couldn't prepare Nova when it was time for him to meet his maker! In The Man Called Nova #5 (Jan. 1977), the young super-powered teenager is shocked and ecstatic to discover that Marvel Comics is looking for him in order to create a comic based on his adventures!

In a surreal moment where comics met reality met comics, Nova came face to face with the creative team behind the proposed fictional comic–Marv Wolfman and Sal Buscema! Both of the creators recall the issue fondly. "Back then we

often put the bullpen in the stories and I was looking to write a light, more fun issue after a few heavy action stories. I always saw Nova as the book for Marvel's youngest super-hero readers as opposed to say Conan or Tomb of Dracula meant for their oldest readers. And as I was writing TOD I wanted something to be the opposite of that book. Besides, I love writing comedy." remembers Wolfman.

When asked about the issue, Buscema replied; "That was a lot of fun. I think Marv kind of made me appear as kind of an idiot (laughs) but that was part of the fun of the thing. It was fun to draw or interpret his writing and put that in picture form. I remember that very specifically and…I can't remember exactly what the line was but I think Marv told me something like 'Just shut up and let's go, Sal.' or something like that. I remember being a little indignant about that (laughs). But, yeah, that was just a fun job."

After meeting the two creators, Nova fought and quickly defeated Tyrannus, an old Hulk villain. With the danger passed, Nova, Wolfman and Buscema go back to the Marvel Comics offices. Once there, they were disappointed when Marvel's publisher, Stan Lee himself, rejected the Nova comic book in favor of publishing Midas, the Million Dollar Mouse!


AS FOR YOU, MARVY, WE'VE JUST SIGNED UP OUR NEWEST CHARACTER.
HIS NAME'S MIDAS THE MILLION DOLLAR MOUSE! GET TO WORK WRITING HIS BOOK, COSTANZA'S DRAWING IT.
EXCEL-SIOR!
MIDAS MOUSE? WHAT WAS WRONG WITH NOVA?
HOW SHOULD I KNOW, SAL? I'M ONLY A COMIC BOOK WRITER!
FIGURES! I MISS GETTING MY VERY OWN COMIC TO A MOUSE! THAT'S THE TYPICAL RICH RIDER LUCK. MAYBE I SHOULD GO TO THE COMPETITION?
NAH, WHO AM I KIDDING? IF YOU'RE GONNA BE IN COMICS--THERE JUST ISN'T ANY COMPETITION TO MARVEL.
AH WELL, MAYBE NEXT YEAR.

The Man Called Nova #6 - 7 (Feb.-Mar. 1977) made up the second story arc involving the war between 'The Terrible Trio' and 'The Dreaded One'. In issue six, we learn that the one the trio feared is an extremely powerful and immortal Egyptian called the Sphinx and we also discover his origin.

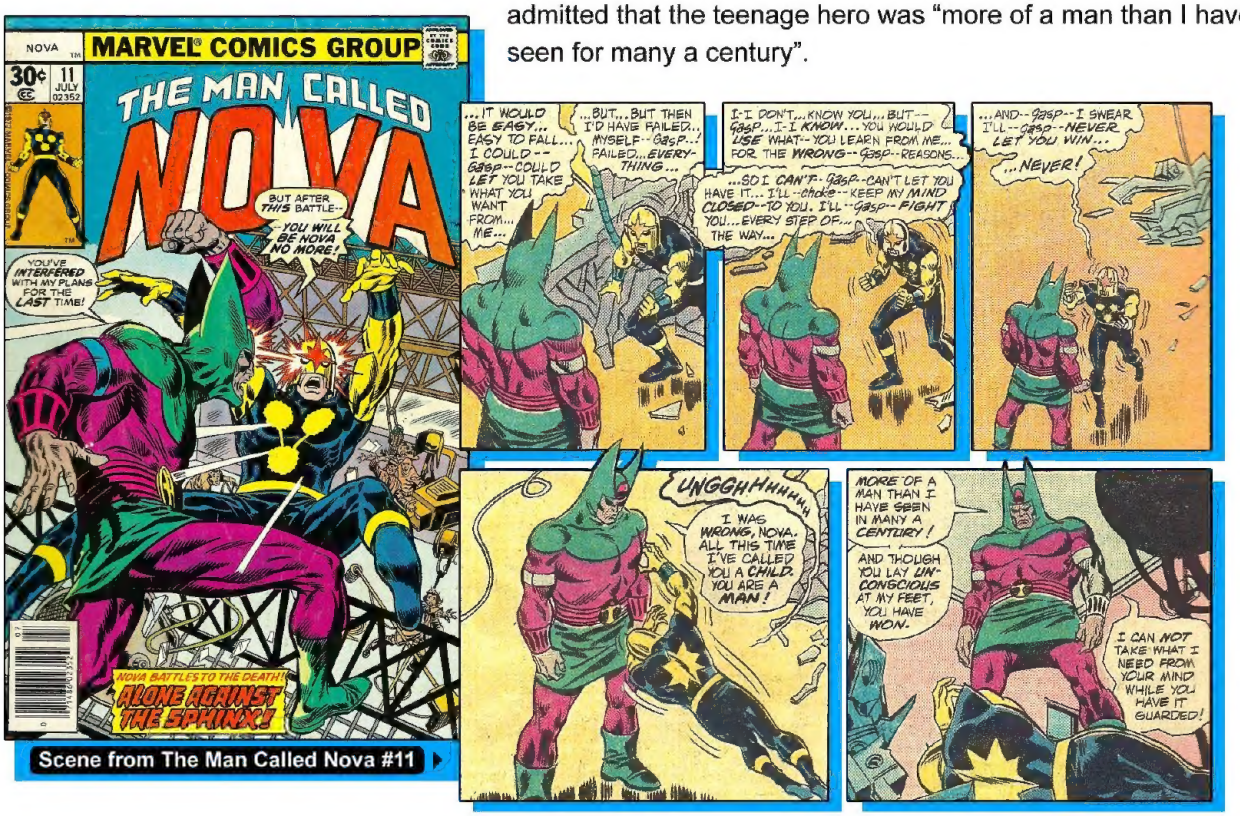
Over 5,000 years ago, the Egyptian pharaoh Ramses was challenged by Moses to a duel of snakes. The Pharaoh's chief wizard lost the battle, was exiled for his failure and wandered the desert for almost a century. During his exile, he uncovered a hidden temple and merged with a powerful gem called the Ka Stone to become the Sphinx.

The inspiration for the Sphinx came from a decidedly non-comic book source. "This comes out of the bible - the sorcerer who faced Moses. I thought wow. That guy had God powers, too - just his were given by the Egyptian Gods. Moses got his power from his God. The bible doesn't say there aren't any other Gods. In the 10 Commandments it says that they shouldn't be worshipped before God. So in comic book terms, if you accept that, you have to assume the sorcerer's power came from his God and he'd make for a great villain character." Wolfman reveals.

The arc ended with the Terrible Trio armed with highly advanced weaponry from an unexpected source – the starship left in Earth orbit by Rhomann Dey! The villains were able to access the ship by temporarily taking control of Nova's mind with one of the Condor's machines.

The Terrible Trio/Sphinx War reached its conclusion in The Man Called Nova #10 - 11 (June-July 1977). Despite being armed with alien weapons, the three found themselves easily outmatched and humiliated by the Sphinx.

But the confrontation between Nova and the Sphinx was one of the biggest highlights of the entire series. In the local television station's studio, Nova and the Sphinx traded punches which shattered equipment and shook walls. Unfortunately, Nova's punches didn't faze the Egyptian but the Sphinx's were devastating. However, Nova fought with a determination that won the Sphinx's respect. As he left an unconscious Nova on the floor, the powerful immortal admitted that the teenage hero was "more of a man than I have seen for many a century".

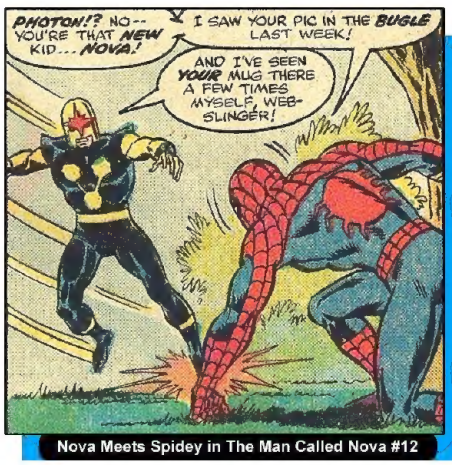

MARVEL COMICS GROUP
THE MAN CALLED NOVA
30¢ 11 JULY 02352
BUT AFTER THIS BATTLE--
YOU WILL BE NOVA NO MORE!
YOU'VE INTERFERED WITH MY PLANS FOR THE LAST TIME!
NOVA BATTLES TO THE DEATH!
ALONE AGAINST THE SPHINX!
...IT WOULD BE EASY... EASY TO FALL... I COULD-- GASP--COULD LET YOU TAKE WHAT YOU WANT FROM... ME...
...BUT...BUT THEN I'D HAVE FAILED... MYSELF--GASP...! FAILED...EVERYTHING...
I-I DON'T...KNOW YOU...BUT-- GASP...I-I KNOW...YOU WOULD USE WHAT--YOU LEARN FROM ME... FOR THE WRONG--GASP--REASONS...
...SO I CAN'T--GASP--CAN'T LET YOU HAVE IT... I'LL--CHOKE--KEEP MY MIND CLOSED--TO YOU. I'LL--GASP--FIGHT YOU...EVERY STEP OF... THE WAY...
...AND--GASP--I SWEAR I'LL--GASP--NEVER LET YOU WIN...
...NEVER!
UNGGHHHHHH
I WAS WRONG, NOVA. ALL THIS TIME I'VE CALLED YOU A CHILD. YOU ARE A MAN!
MORE OF A MAN THAN I HAVE SEEN IN MANY A CENTURY!
AND THOUGH YOU LAY UNCONSCIOUS AT MY FEET, YOU HAVE WON.
I CAN NOT TAKE WHAT I NEED FROM YOUR MIND WHILE YOU HAVE IT GUARDED!
Scene from The Man Called Nova #11

The Man Called Nova #12 (Aug. 1977) saw the hero who was, according to #1's cover blurb, published "in the marvelous tradition of Spider-Man" meet the web-slinger himself. The meeting of New York heroes was too big for one title and even one writer. The crossover saw the creators of Black Nova, Marv Wolfman and Len Wein, reunite to write a murder mystery that began in Wolfman's title and ended in Wein's book.

The story involved the death of Rich Rider's uncle Ralph by the supervillain Photon. The two writers chose to approach the crossover in a unique way. After the discovery of Ralph Rider's body amongst a handful of calendar pages and the standard 'heroes fight because of a misunderstanding' situation, Wolfman supplied Wein (and the readers) with five suspects and the clues to solve the mystery.

"Working on the Spidey crossover was fun because I was able to set up a mystery and see if he could figure out what I had done. He actually didn't get the JASOND clue but worked out the results. Then I went in and told him that so we could plant it in the story." Wolfman reveals.

The action continued over in Amazing Spider-Man #171 (Aug. 1977) with Len Wein picking up the writing chores. "I love a good mystery and it was fun being challenged to solve one. I take great pride in the fact that I succeeded, whether I used Marv's clues or not." Wein recalls. The Spider-Man writer was definitely up to the challenge! He revealed to the readers that Ralph Rider used the calendar pages of July through December to spell out the true identity of Photon aka Jason Dean. After capturing Photon and a whole bunch of AIM agents, Nova and Spider-Man parted as friends.


PHOTON!? NO-- YOU'RE THAT NEW KID... NOVA!
I SAW YOUR PIC IN THE BUGLE LAST WEEK!
AND I'VE SEEN YOUR MUG THERE A FEW TIMES MYSELF, WEB-SLINGER!
Nova Meets Spidey in The Man Called Nova #12

The Man Called Nova #13 - 18 (Aug. 1977-Mar. 1978) was a standard story arc involving Nova's fight with Yellow Claw. It began with a terrific battle with the Sandman, the Claw's hired hand. Following his victory over the sandy

supervillain, Nova was approached by Nick Fury of SHIELD to continue the fight against Yellow Claw. Over the course of the storyline, the two allies saved New York from a gigantic tidal wave and stopped the Claw.

During the arc, the series took on a darker tone in both story and art with Nova pushing away his friends and family. When asked if this was an editorial direction change on his part to help sales or a choice to simply evolve the character, Wolfman responded; "It was both. My hope was to bring the readers along with me as we got more and more into Richard's story. Sales weren't as high as I had hoped (or so I was told) and I thought I'd goose up the intrigue factor, make it more compelling. I still think the lighter approach was better but in an effort to boost sales and evolve the character, as you say, I moved Richard into slightly darker places. Had the book continued I would have lightened up the following stories, going back and forth between darker stories and lighter ones."

The following issue (#19) was Marv Wolfman's tribute issue to one of his influential writers, the Flash's John Broome, and Broome's artist on the Flash, Carmine Infantino, who had replaced Sal Buscema as penciler on The Man Called Nova since #15. The issue introduced a new villain named Blackout.

"Having been heavily influenced by John Broome's writing, as well as Stan Lee's, I thought of Nova in many ways as Marvel's Flash in terms of the rogue's gallery; as many characters as I could come up with that fit the concept. Blackout was very deliberately designed to be a Flash-like villain once I had Carmine on the art. The entire story was constructed to be a Flash like story." Wolfman remembers.

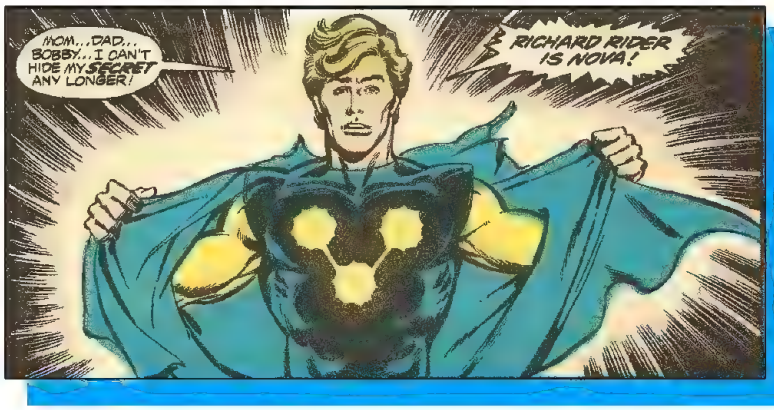
SO I SAID, BARRY, YOU'RE SLOWING DOWN MY ACTION.
YOU DIDN'T REALLY, WALLY, DID YOU?
OH, HE SAID HE HAD SOME KIND OF BUSINESS MEETING IN THE CITY.
CUTIE, GIVE HIM THIS FOR ME FOR BEING SUCH A NICE GUY, WILL YOU?
EVEN WITH ALL HIS PROBLEMS RIGHT NOW.
WELL, I DON'T KNOW IF I'LL GO THAT FAR, BUT I'LL TELL HIM THANKS FOR YOU
The Wally West panel from The Man Called Nova #19

The issue also gave readers an unofficial DC/Marvel crossover with Wally West, DC's Kid Flash! Nova's writer admits; "I don't remember how that came about. But the Blackout story was my tribute to Carmine and John Broome's great Flash stories, so either I suggested it or Carmine, drawing kids who look like that, drew someone who happened to look like Wally and I picked up on the resemblance and wrote to it. I wish I could tell you now precisely why Wally makes his appearance in that story, but I can't. I just have a hunch it was simply a fortuitous resemblance I played to."

For his part, Infantino couldn't recall the details of the event but was surprised with the crossover. "I don't know how he (Wolfman) got away with that. Didn't DC complain? It was just the name Wally West? Well, you can't do much about that then. (If he'd been in the Kid Flash costume) DC would have gone after them for that if any of that had happened. You can use the name like that if it's not the same character."

Following this issue, Wolfman and Sal Buscema reunited to team Nova up with the Thing over in Marvel Two-In-One Annual #3 (1978). It was during their battle with the other-worldly Monitors that Nova discovered he could create a space warp by riding the electron path of an actual star's nova and traveling faster than light!

Later in the series, in The Man Called Nova #21 (Sept. 1978), Marv Wolfman decided to break one of the sacred conventions of the superhero genre. Richard Rider, no longer feeling he could deal with the stress of hiding his Nova secret, revealed the truth of his alter ego to his family! The writer explained that "I never much liked the idea of secret identities. Look at how loosely I handled them in Titans later on. I always felt they were way old school. I couldn't reveal Dick Grayson's in Titans because of Batman, but I never tried to play games with them. I used to hate the Lois searches for Superman's ID stories when I was a kid. So it seemed to make sense with Nova telling his parents. After all, if you can't trust your parents...."



Richard Rider reveals his identity to his parents and brother in this panel from The Man Called Nova #21!

Nova Goes Into A Black Hole:

The Man Called Nova series concluded soon after with a space-spanning epic that involved numerous superheroes and three separate titles! The Xandar-Skrull War began in The Man Called Nova #23 (Jan. 1979) and continued through the final issue #25 (May 1979). Nova, along with the Comet and Crimebuster (Wolfman's father/son creations from earlier in the series), Tomb of Dracula villain Dr. Sun, Powerhouse (revealed to be a Xandarian Syfon Warrior who had followed Rhomann Dey to Earth and lost his memory), and Diamondhead, joined the Sphinx to journey to the surviving remains of Xandar. The Egyptian had taken over the Nova Prime Starship in order to journey to Xandar and learn the secret to ending his immortality that he had been unable to force from Nova earlier.

The Xandar-Skrull War and the Sphinx Galactus Showdown ran from Fantastic Four #204 to #214

However, before they could reach Xandar, the title was cancelled. With the book's cancellation, Marv Wolfman kept the story going in Fantastic Four (another title he was writing) beginning in #204 (March 1979). The Xandar-Skrull War's storyline ended in Fantastic Four #209 (Aug. 1979) with the war unresolved.

The war and the story of Nova would reach its conclusion in another title called Rom. In Rom #24 (Nov. 1981), writer Bill Mantlo revealed to readers that the war had been ongoing for a year. In a final showdown with the Skrulls and Diamondhead (who had betrayed Xandar), Nova and Rom defeated the Skrulls' massive invasion and ended the war. However, the leaders of Xandar felt Nova's power was needed at Xandar to provide security for the future. Given the choice of keeping his powers on Xandar or return to Earth and his family, Richard Rider was faced with a difficult decision. With the gratitude of the Xandarians, Rich Rider chose to return home powerless to the family he had been missing terribly.

Although the series only lasted twenty five issues along with various appearances in other titles, the character of Nova would have a lasting impression on fans and future comic book writers. In the years since the character's return from the publishing "black hole" in 1989, Nova has appeared in numerous comics including a popular series launched in 2007. Ironically, the new series has Marv Wolfman's original unused title–Nova!

Enjoy Prejudice & Power: The Trial of Nova FREE!

with Your FREE Month Trial!

FREE TRIAL*

Enjoy These Other Nova-Related Titles!

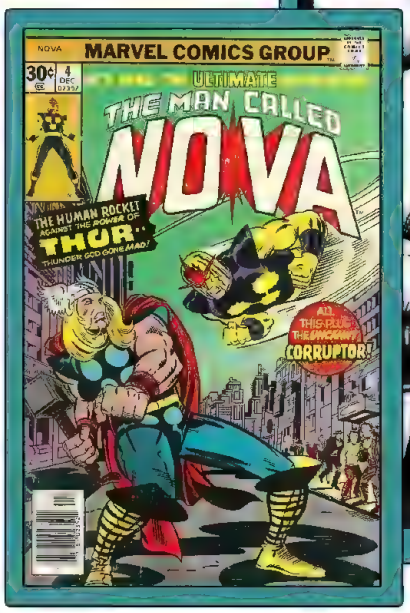
NovaFlix
A Division of Nova Express

* Pun Intended

Join Today!

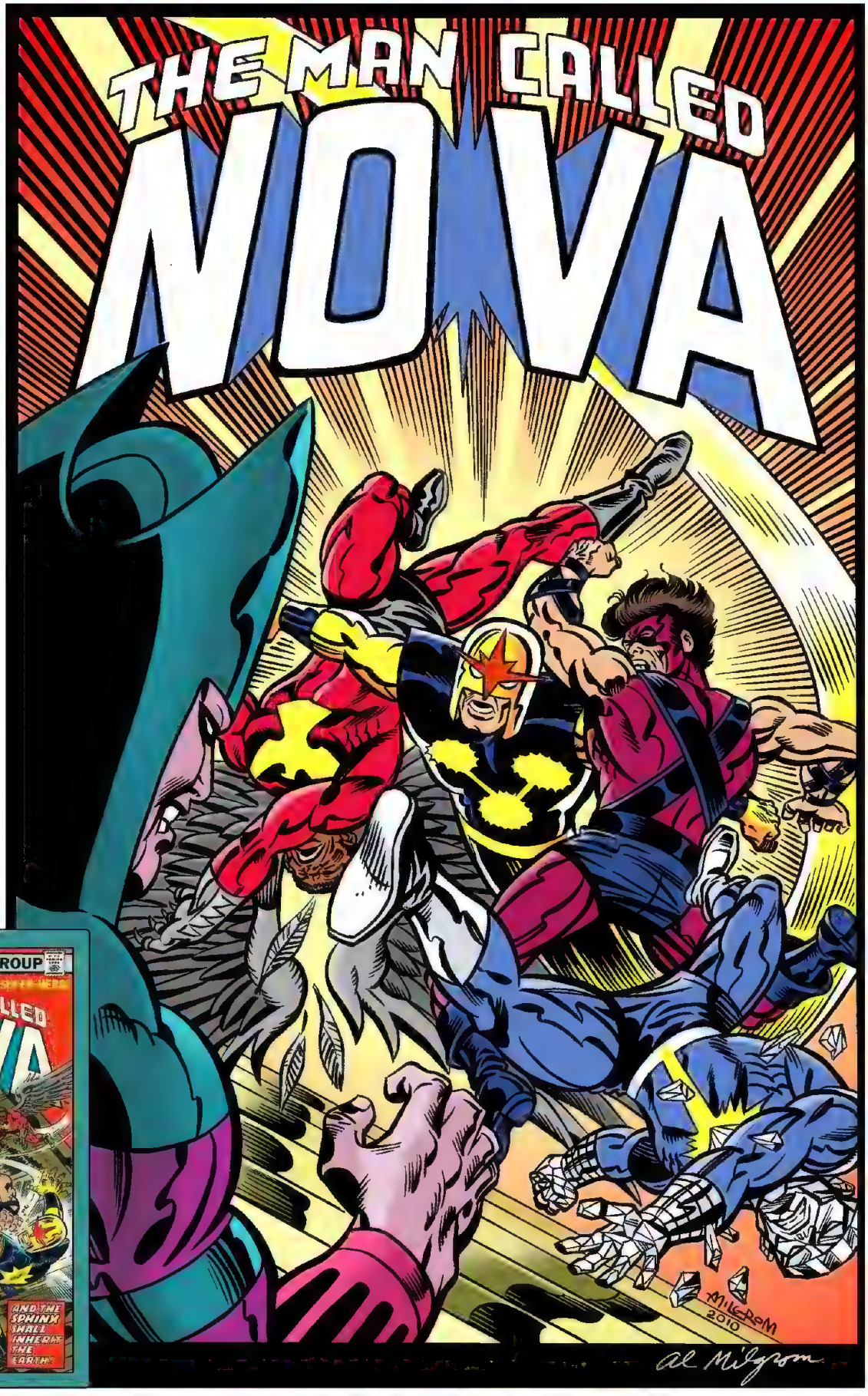
Nova Sketchbook

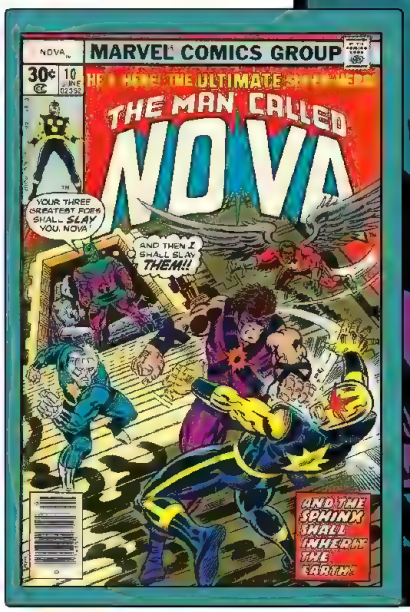
Artist Mark Morales (Secret Invasion, Siege, Thor) drew a "One Minute Later" cover to the scene shown on the cover for The Man Called Nova #4! The cover concept is to show what happened after the events shown on the original cover by Jack Kirby (lower left).



Nova Sketchbook

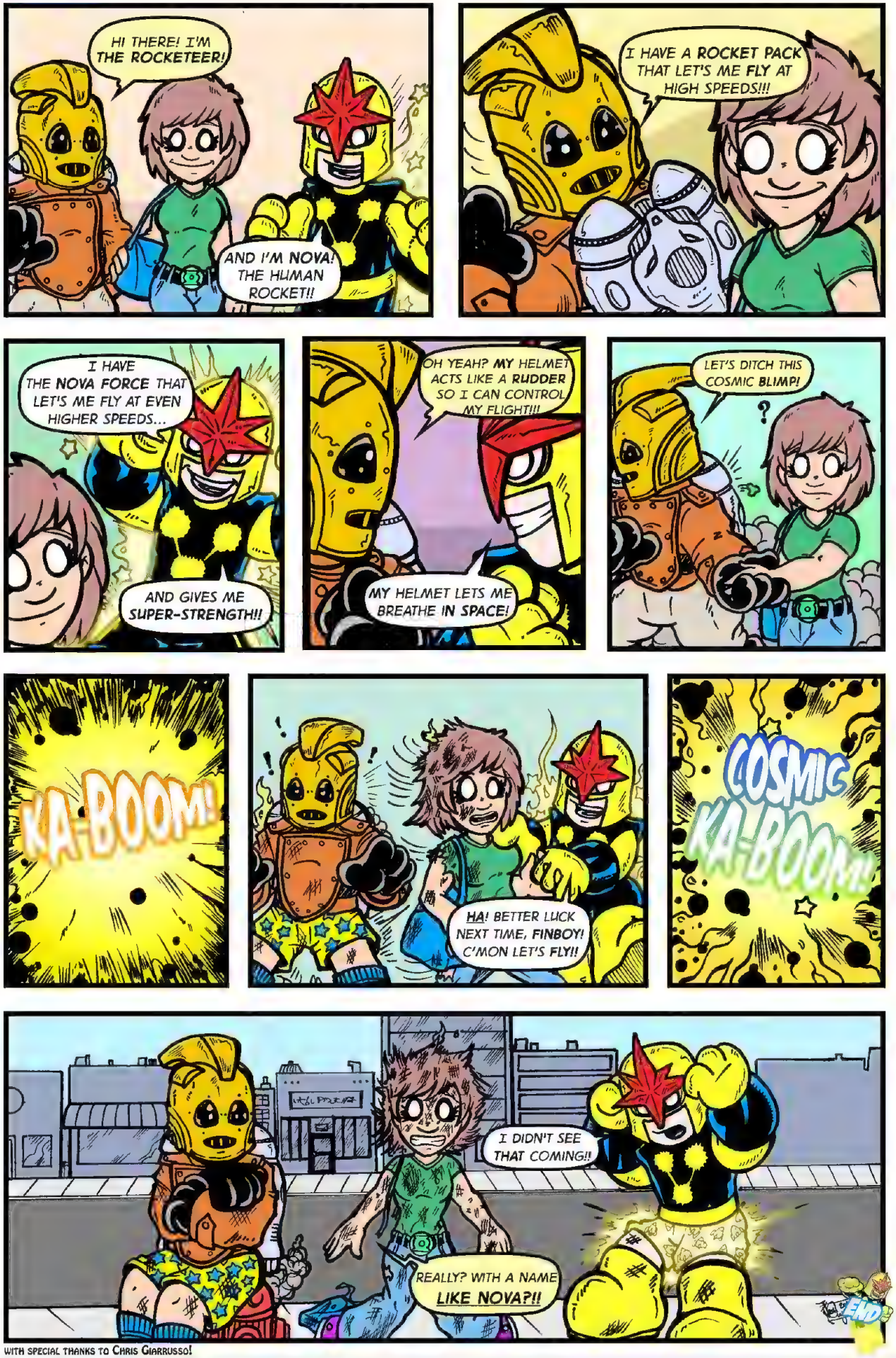
Nova fan Mike Finn commissioned artist Al Milgrom to draw a "One Minute Later" cover to the original cover he had done for The Man Called Nova #10 in 1977. The cover concept is to show what happened after the events shown on the original (lower left).





THE MINI ADVENTURES OF NOVA THE HUMAN ROCKET

ART BY JOSH C. LYMAN
SCRIPT BY DOUG SMITH


HI THERE! I'M THE ROCKETEER!
AND I'M NOVA! THE HUMAN ROCKET!!
I HAVE A ROCKET PACK THAT LET'S ME FLY AT HIGH SPEEDS!!!
I HAVE THE NOVA FORCE THAT LET'S ME FLY AT EVEN HIGHER SPEEDS...
AND GIVES ME SUPER-STRENGTH!!
OH YEAH? MY HELMET ACTS LIKE A RUDDER SO I CAN CONTROL MY FLIGHT!!!
MY HELMET LETS ME BREATHE IN SPACE!
LET'S DITCH THIS COSMIC BLIMP!
?
KA-BOOM!
HA! BETTER LUCK NEXT TIME, FINBOY! C'MON LET'S FLY!!
COSMIC KA-BOOM!
I DIDN'T SEE THAT COMING!!
REALLY? WITH A NAME LIKE NOVA?!!
THE END

WITH SPECIAL THANKS TO CHRIS GIARRUSSO!

What Might Have Been

Around 1989, Erik Larsen submitted a pitch for a five part Nova story to run in *Marvel Comics Presents*. At first, it was approved. However, it was soon shelved due to the launching of the New Warriors. Marvel SVP of Publishing Tom Brevoort has graciously shared the entire 28 page proposal! Thanks, Tom!

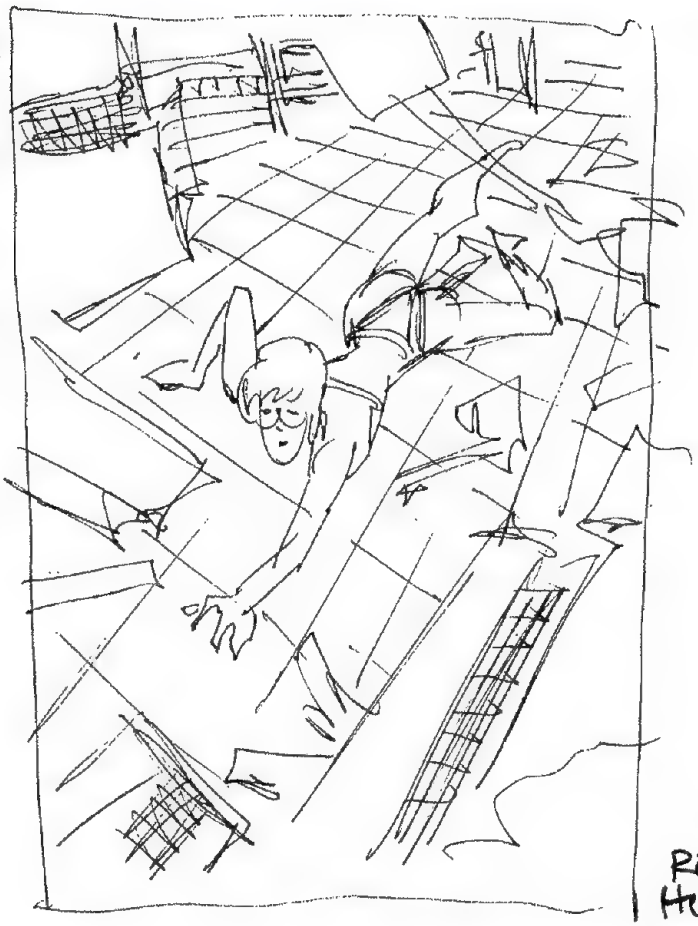
Xerox 1x/100% PAGE 1

QUEEN ADORA AMIDST RUIN OF XANDAR.

NEBULA AND HER MERCENARIES DESTROYED HER WORLD LEFT HER FOR DEAD

SHE HOPES TO RIGHT A WRONG BEFORE DEATH COMES TO HER

SHE CRAWLS, WOUNDS HAVING TAKEN THEIR TOLL.



NOVA. RETURN OF THE HUMAN ROCKET

THE MAN CALLED

NOVA

5-PART SERIAL

BY ERIK LARSEN

SEE PAGES 3,4 FOR REVISIONS!

ERIK

PAGE 2

SHE STRUGGLES TO PULL HERSELF UPRIGHT

HER GOAL IS WITHIN REACH

SHE HAS LITTLE TIME LEFT

THE TASK SHE'S SET FOR HERSELF IS A SIMPLE ONE. TO GIVE BACK WHAT WAS TAKEN AWAY.

[redacted]

TO RETURN THE POWER OF NOVA TO THE [redacted] CALLED RICHARD RIDER.

SHE HAD ALREADY PROMISED HERSELF TO DO JUST THAT DESPITE OBJECTIONS FROM THE OTHERS SHE THOUGHT HE EARNED HIS POWERS

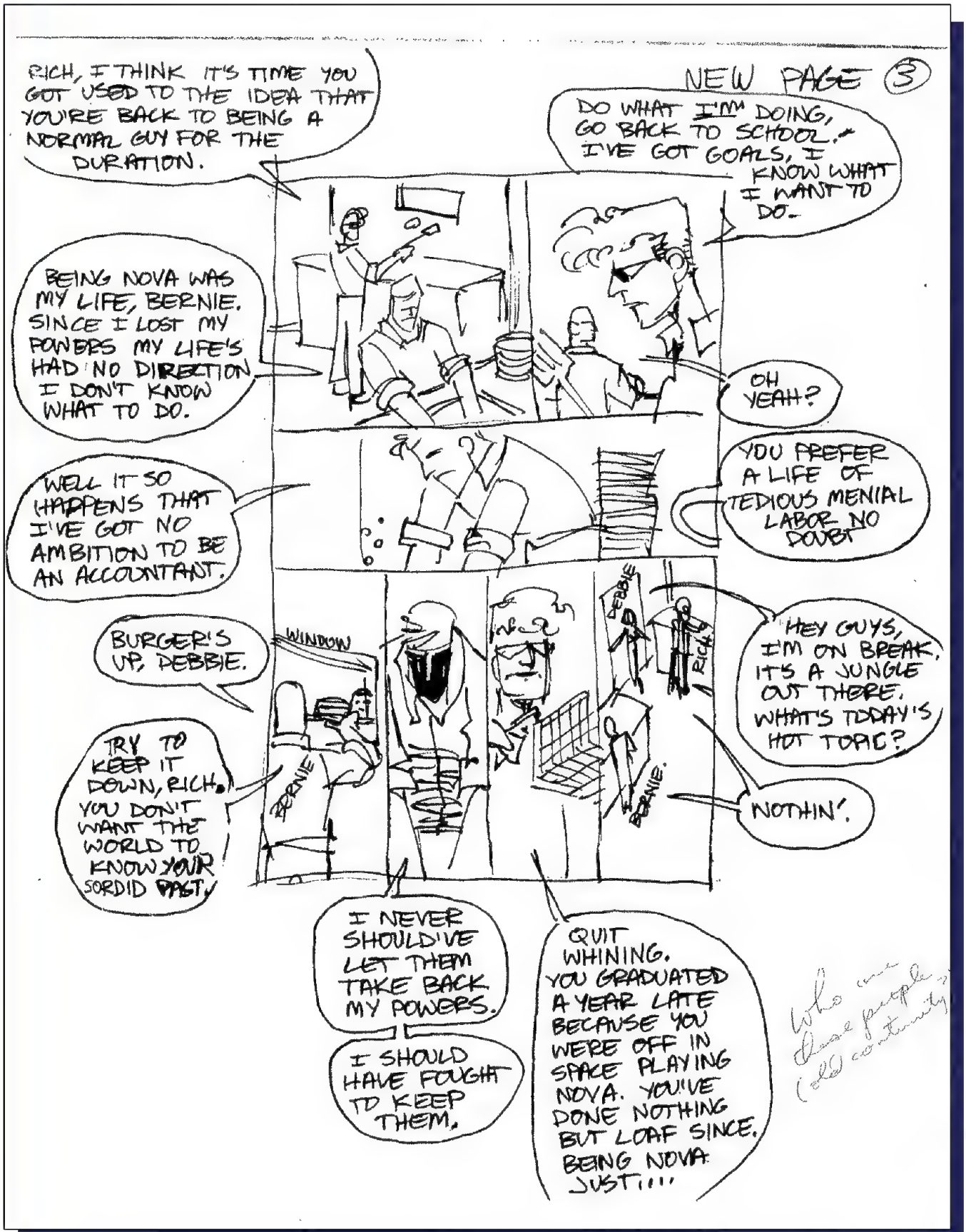
HAD NEBULA NOT ATTACKED SHE WOULD [redacted] HAVE DONE [redacted] THE SAME.

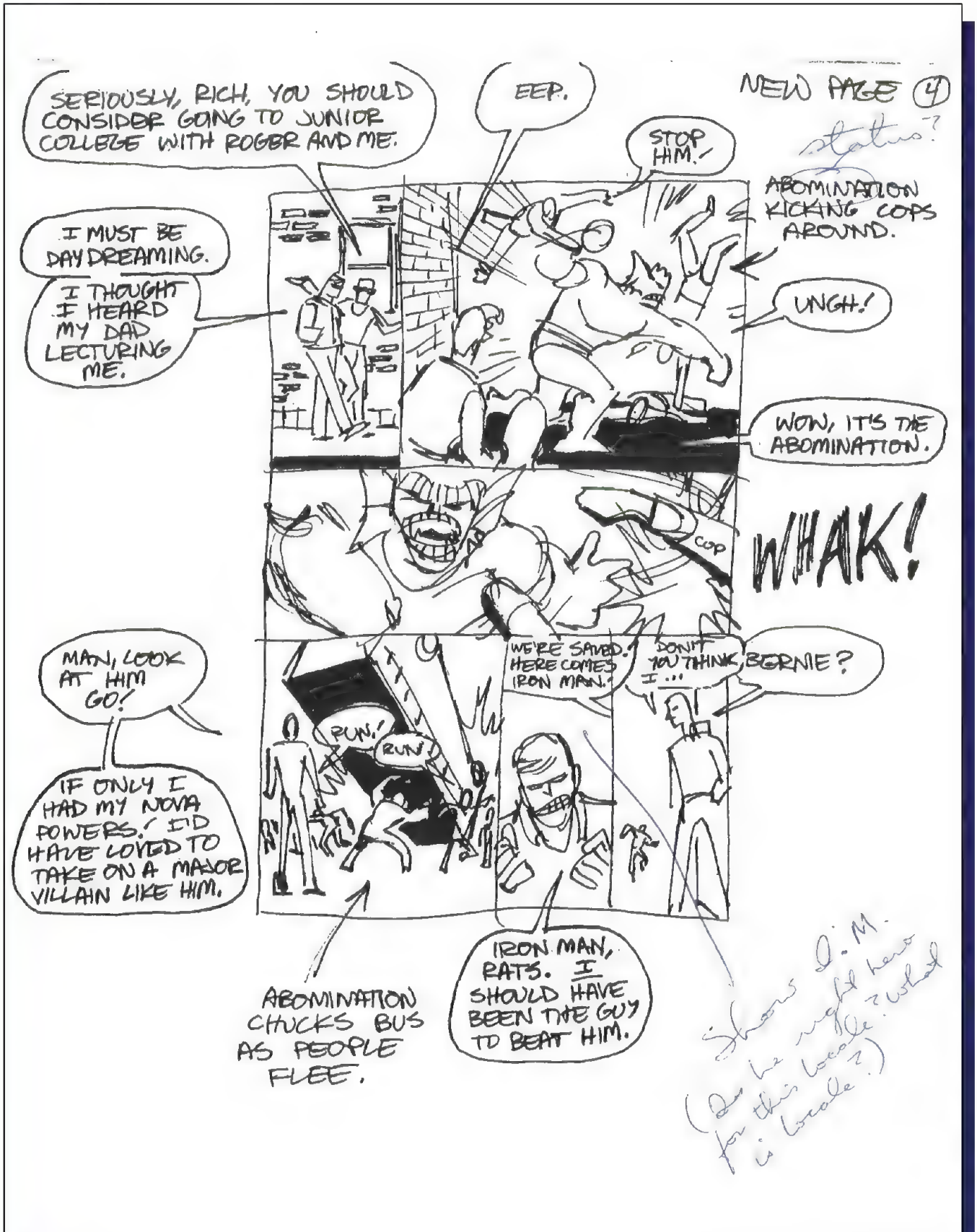
ONLY NOW SHE'S ASSURING THE SURVIVAL OF AT LEAST A PORTION OF THE GRANDURE THAT WAS XANDAR.

THE DEED IS DONE. AND UPON [redacted] COMPLETION OF HIS MISSION SHE ALLOWS OBLIVION TO AT LAST OVERTAKE HER.

THE POWER OF NOVA IS YOURS AGAIN, RICHARD RIDER

USE IT [redacted] WISELY.


NEW PAGE (3)
RICH, I THINK IT'S TIME YOU GOT USED TO THE IDEA THAT YOU'RE BACK TO BEING A NORMAL GUY FOR THE DURATION.
DO WHAT I'M DOING, GO BACK TO SCHOOL. I'VE GOT GOALS, I KNOW WHAT I WANT TO DO.
BEING NOVA WAS MY LIFE, BERNIE. SINCE I LOST MY POWERS MY LIFE'S HAD NO DIRECTION I DON'T KNOW WHAT TO DO.
OH YEAH?
YOU PREFER A LIFE OF TEDIOUS MENIAL LABOR NO DOUBT
WELL IT SO HAPPENS THAT I'VE GOT NO AMBITION TO BE AN ACCOUNTANT.
WINDOW
BURGER'S UP, DEBBIE.
HEY GUYS, I'M ON BREAK. IT'S A JUNGLE OUT THERE. WHAT'S TODAY'S HOT TOPIC?
TRY TO KEEP IT DOWN, RICH. YOU DON'T WANT THE WORLD TO KNOW YOUR SORDID PAST.
NOTHIN'.
I NEVER SHOULD'VE LET THEM TAKE BACK MY POWERS.
I SHOULD HAVE FOUGHT TO KEEP THEM.
QUIT WHINING. YOU GRADUATED A YEAR LATE BECAUSE YOU WERE OFF IN SPACE PLAYING NOVA. YOU'VE DONE NOTHING BUT LOAF SINCE BEING NOVA JUST!!!
Who are these people? (old) continuity?


NEW PAGE (4)
status?
SERIOUSLY, RICH, YOU SHOULD CONSIDER GOING TO JUNIOR COLLEGE WITH ROGER AND ME.
EEP.
STOP HIM.
ABOMINATION KICKING COPS AROUND.
I MUST BE DAYDREAMING.
I THOUGHT I HEARD MY DAD LECTURING ME.
UNGH!
WOW, IT'S THE ABOMINATION.
COP
WHAK!
MAN, LOOK AT HIM GO!
IF ONLY I HAD MY NOVA POWERS, I'D HAVE LOVED TO TAKE ON A MAJOR VILLAIN LIKE HIM.
RUN!
RUN!
WE'RE SAVED. HERE COMES IRON MAN.
DON'T YOU THINK, I...
BERNIE?
ABOMINATION CHUCKS BUS AS PEOPLE FLEE.
IRON MAN, RATS. I SHOULD HAVE BEEN THE GUY TO BEAT HIM.
Shows I.M. (Do he might have for this locale? What is locale?)

PAGE 5
WELCOME HOME ROG! TAKE THIS LUG OFF MY HANDS. HE'S IN A BLUE FUNK AND I'VE GOT HOMEWORK TO CATCH UP ON.
I'VE GOT HOMEWORK TOO. WHAT'S THE STORY FELLA?
ROGER "CAPS" COOPER. RICH & BERNIE'S OTHER ROOMATE
NOTHING MUCH. JUST IN A REFLECTIVE MOOD.
THAT'S NOTHING NEW. YOUR DAD CALLED JUST BEFORE I LEFT FOR WORK. I FORGOT TO LEAVE YOU A MESSAGE
ALSO, THIS LETTER CAME FOR YOU. LOOKS FANCY TOO.
GIVE IT TO ME
FROM YOUR OLD GAL GINGER I BELIEVE
NOT SO FAST.
COME ON.
A FELLOW IN YOUR STATE SHOULDN'T BE READING LOVE LETTERS FROM OLD FLAMES. I'D BEST READ IT OVER FIRST TO ASSURE ITS WHOLESOMENESS
QUIT CLOWNING.
HAVEN'T HEARD FROM HER IN A LONG TIME. PERHAPS SHE WANTS TO COME CRAWLING BACK.
GUYS, I'M TRYING TO READ
THIS ISN'T FUNNY, YOU LITTLE RUNT
CAPS JUMPS ON TOP OF COUCH. RICH PERSUES.
I'VE GOT IT. NO WONDER YOU CAN'T MAKE THE BASEBALL TEAM, I CAUGHT YOU EASY.
I TRIPPED, THAT'S ALL
BLUE BLAZES! IT'S A WEDDING INVITATION GINGER'S GETTING MARRIED.

PAGE (6)

WELL, WHAT'D I EXPECT? I HAVEN'T TALKED TO GINGER SINCE BEFORE MY YEAR LONG SPACE ADVENTURE. WHEN I CAME HOME SHE'D ALREADY GRADUATED AND MOVED ON.

I GRADUATED A YEAR LATER ALONG WITH ROGER.

RICH AT THE DOCKS

DID I EXPECT HER TO WAIT FOR ME? I DIDN'T MAKE ANY EFFORT TO CONTACT HER. CATCHING UP IN SCHOOL WAS A HANDY EXCUSE BUT I GUESS I WAS JUST A LITTLE SCARED OF WHAT I MIGHT HEAR.

GINGERS LIFE HAS GONE ON WITHOUT ME. WHY IS THAT SO HARD TO ACCEPT?

FUNNY, I THOUGHT WE'D LAST FOREVER.

WHAT'S HAPPENED TO ME?

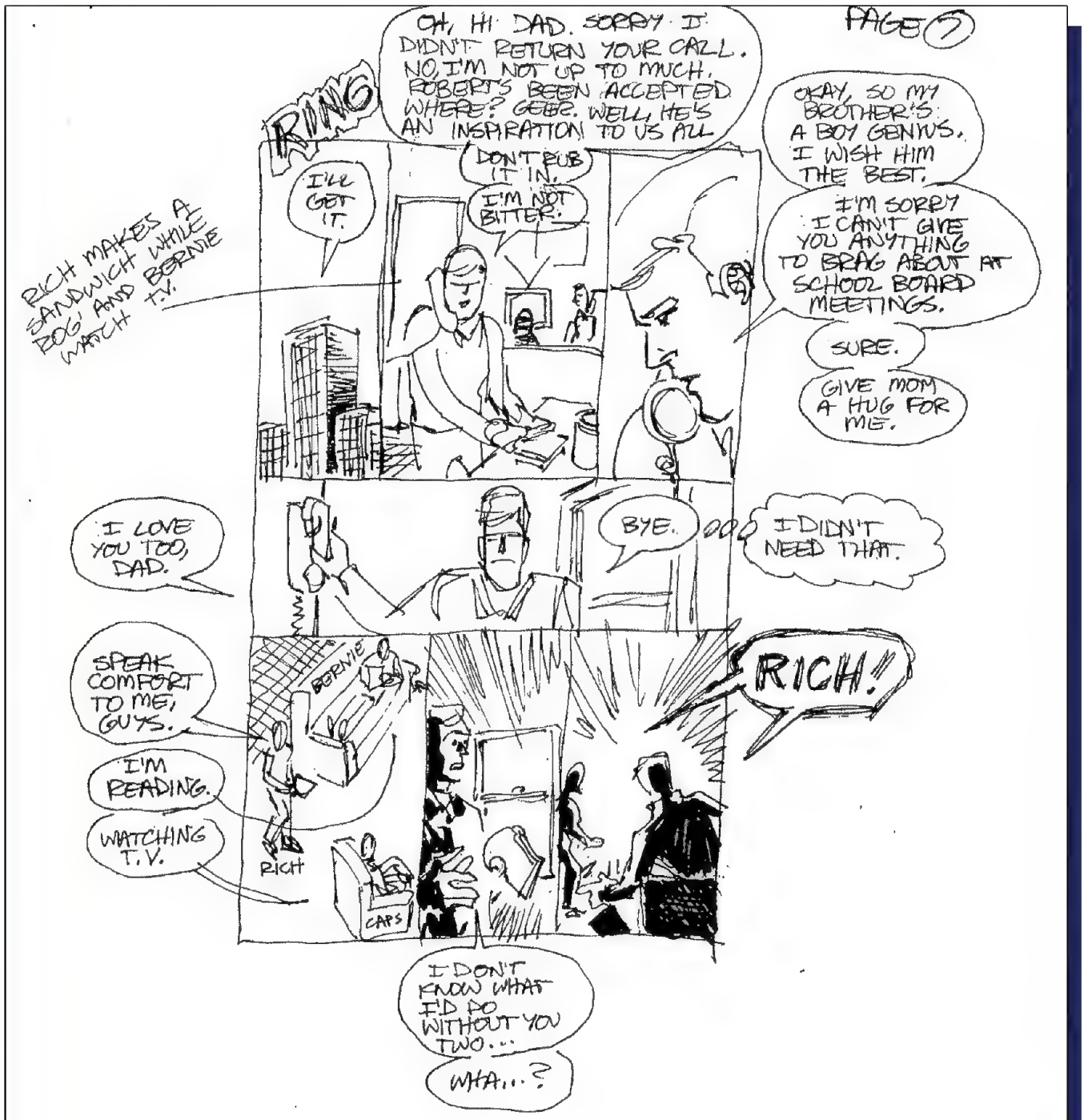
I DIDN'T THINK AHEAD. AS NOVA I LIVED ONE DAY AT A TIME. THAT'S OVER, HIGH SCHOOL'S LONG PAST AND I'VE GOT NOWHERE TO GO.

I'VE GOT TO COME TO GRIPS WITH MYSELF. I CAN'T KEEP PUTTING EVERYTHING ON HOLD.

"WHAT DO YOU WANT TO BE WHEN YOU GROW UP, RICHARD?"

I DON'T KNOW.

IT'S TIME TO GET ON WITH MY LIFE.


PAGE 7
OH, HI DAD. SORRY I DIDN'T RETURN YOUR CALL. NO, I'M NOT UP TO MUCH. ROBERT'S BEEN ACCEPTED WHERE? GEEZ. WELL, HE'S AN INSPIRATION TO US ALL
RING
I'LL GET IT.
DON'T RUB IT IN.
I'M NOT BITTER.
OKAY, SO MY BROTHER'S A BOY GENIUS. I WISH HIM THE BEST.
I'M SORRY I CAN'T GIVE YOU ANYTHING TO BRAG ABOUT AT SCHOOL BOARD MEETINGS.
SURE.
GIVE MOM A HUG FOR ME.
RICH MAKES A SANDWICH WHILE BOB AND BERNIE WATCH T.V.
I LOVE YOU TOO, DAD.
BYE.
I DIDN'T NEED THAT.
SPEAK COMFORT TO ME, GUYS.
BERNIE
RICH!!
I'M READING.
WATCHING T.V.
RICH
CAPS
I DON'T KNOW WHAT I'D DO WITHOUT YOU TWO...
WHA...?

PAGE (8)

CONTINUED...

why are powers back?

NOVA II

PAGE (1)

RECAP:
LOST POWERS. FINISHED SCHOOL. MOVED IN WITH CAPS COOPER BERNIE DILLON. TOLD THEM HIS SECRET. WASHED DISHES. JUST GOT POWERS BACK.

RICH, THIS IS TOTALLY COOL. YOU'RE A SUPER GUY! YOU SHOULD'VE TOLD US THE FIRST TIME. THIS IS GOING TO BE GREAT.

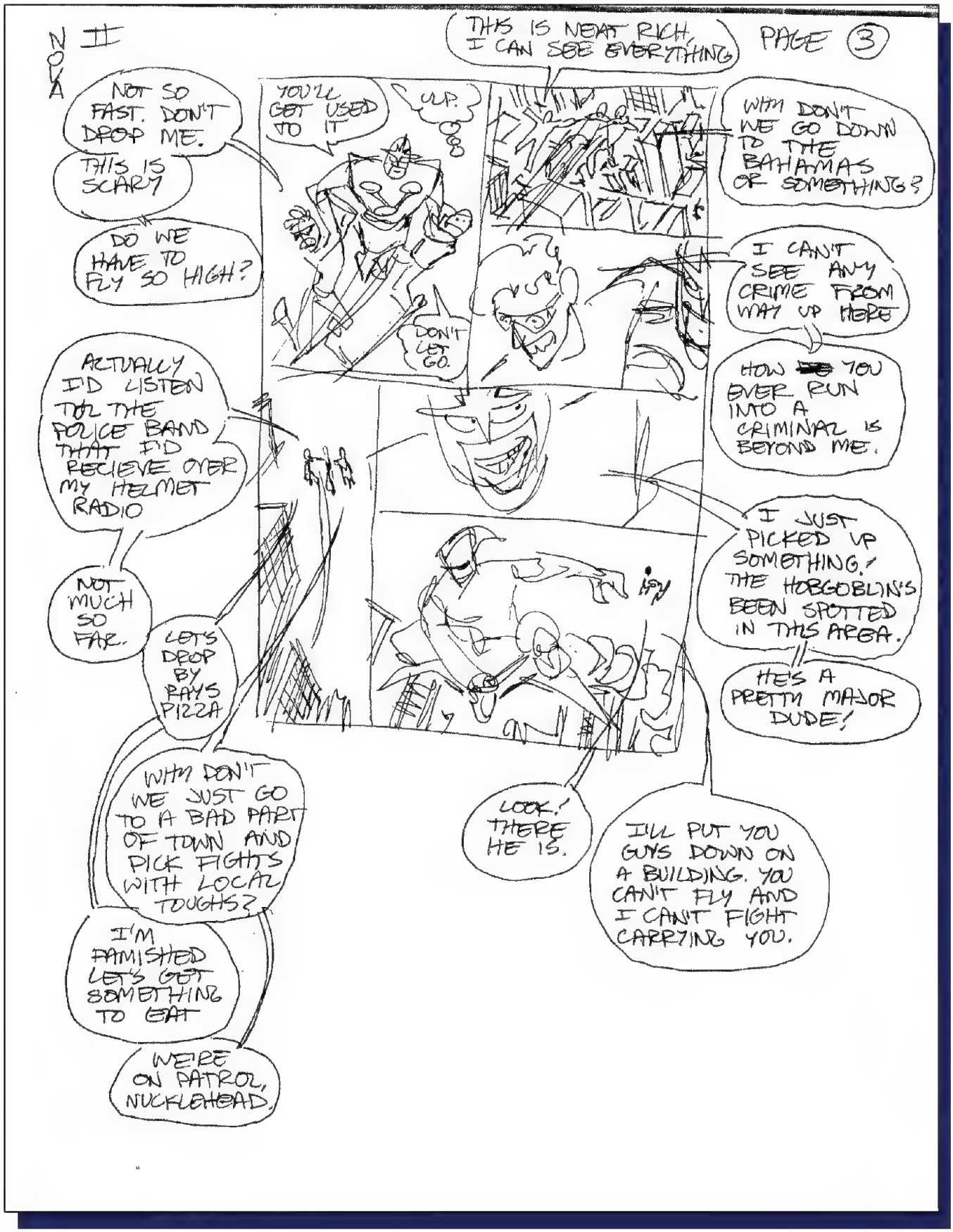
YOU'VE GOT TO FLY US AROUND. WE COULD GO ON PATROL WITH YOU OR SOMETHING.

I CAN'T WAIT TO GO FLYING AROUND

MAYBE WE'LL RUN INTO THE ABOMINATION AGAIN OR DOCTOR DOOM OR THE RED SKULL.

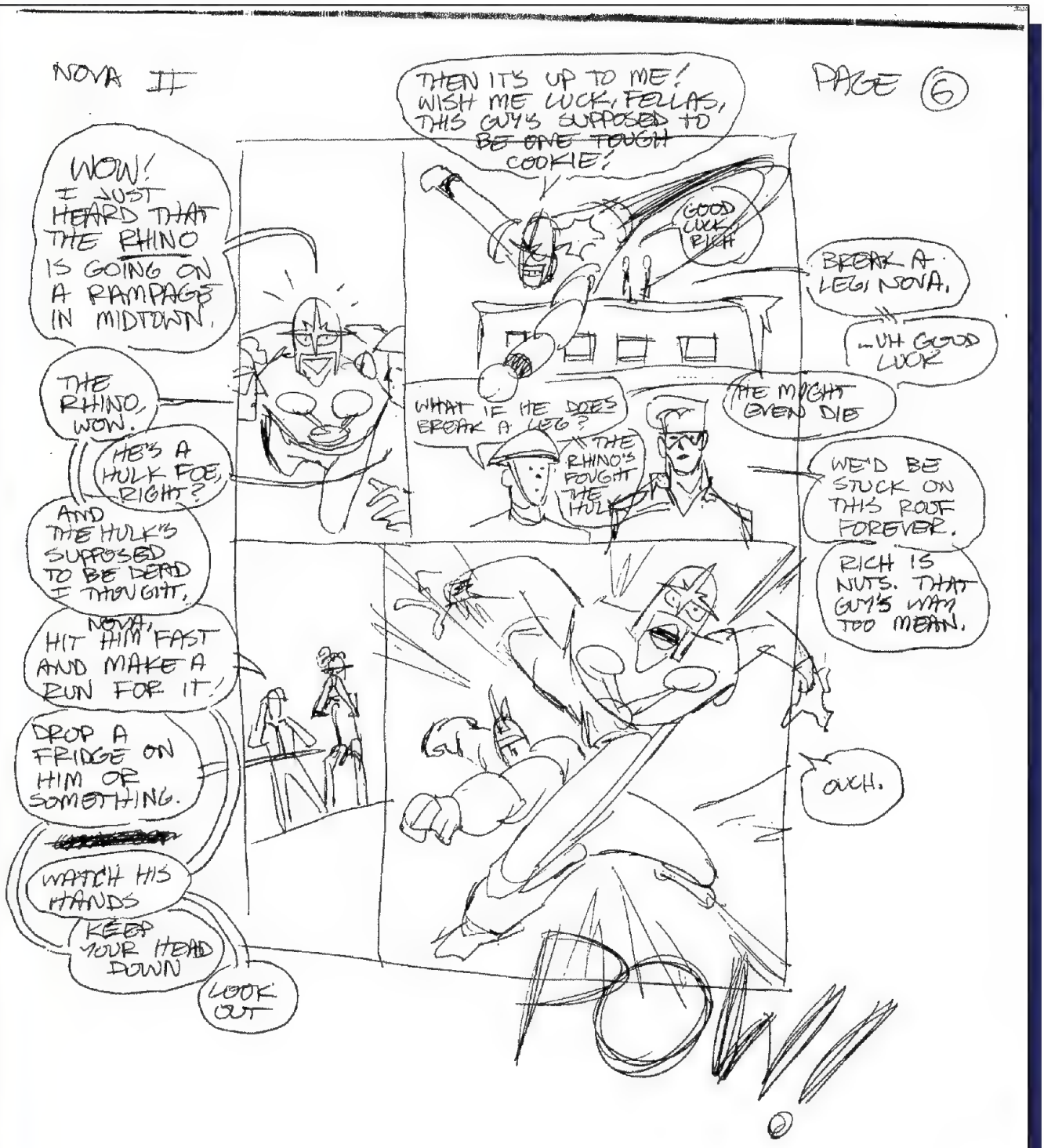
THINK OF THE BABES WE COULD MEET.

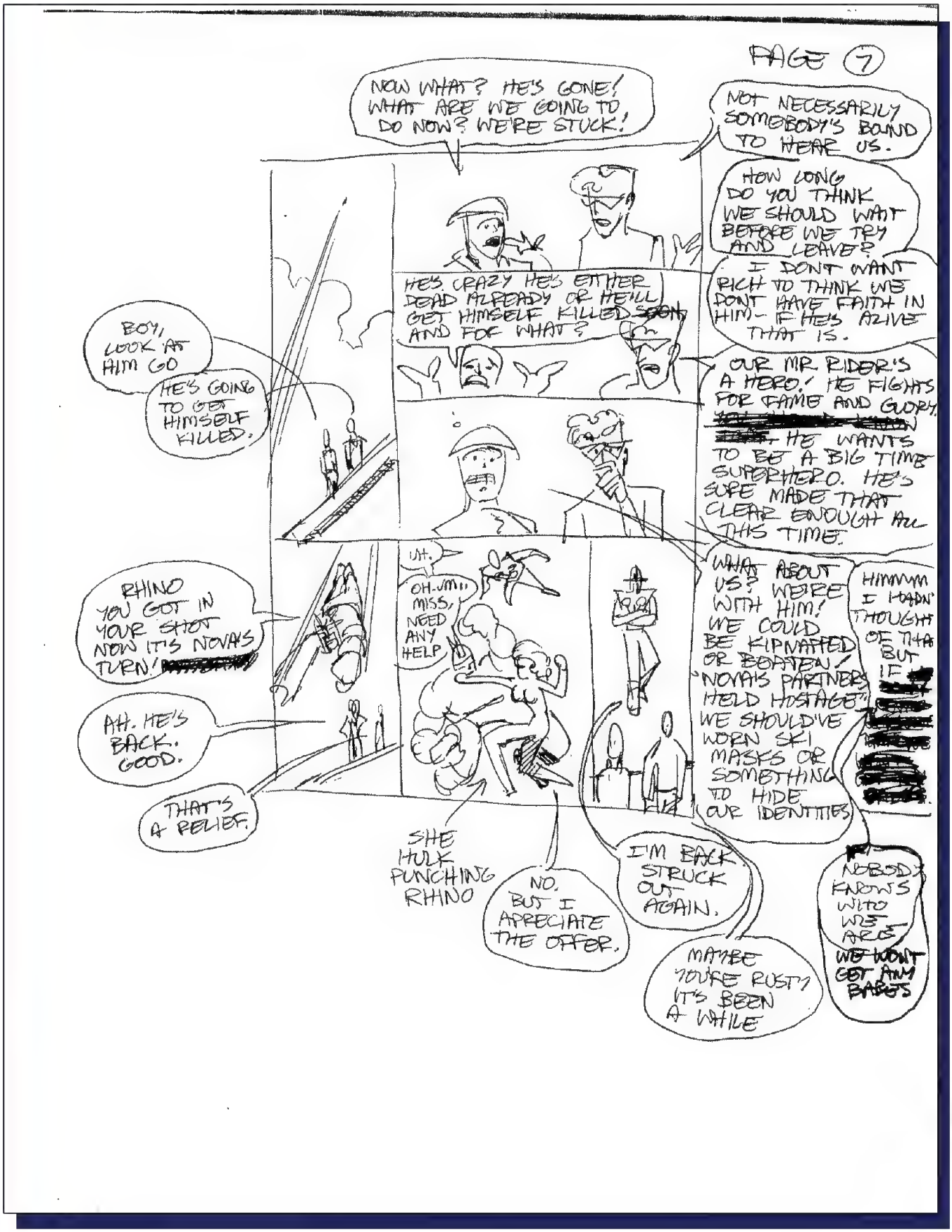
N II
PAGE (2)
WITH 3 GUYS WE'LL SPOT MORE TROUBLE. WE COULD DISTRACT THE BAD GUYS TOO SO YOU COULD GET IN A GOOD SUCKER PUNCH.
ROG' AND I CAN BE LIKE YOUR PARTNERS WE'LL [redacted] PLY [redacted] AROUND WITH YOU. WE CAN'T FIGHT OR ANYTHING BUT WE'LL TELL YOU TO WATCH YOUR BACK AND STUFF.
EVERYBODY WILL KNOW YOU'RE OUR PAL WE'D GET BABES GALORE.
HMM
PUTS FRIDGE DOWN.
WHAT DO YOU THINK?
GREAT IDEA, HUH?
OKAY, I'LL DO IT. GET A JACKET OR SOMETHING WE'LL BE FLYING FAST
TRY AND STAY OUT OF THE WAY WHEN THE FISTS START FLYING YOUR NOT INVULNERABLE Y'KNOW!
I'LL GRAB KNEE PADS AND A HEAVY JACKET
MY BIKE HELMET SHOULD COME IN HANDY
GEEZ, THIS IS WEIRD. I HOPE I CAN TRUST CAPS + BERNIE WITH MY SECRET. THEY'RE MY BEST PALS BUT I'LL HATE THEM TO GET ME IN TROUBLE.
STAY HERE OKAY
OKAY
DON'T FLY AWAY WITHOUT US OR ANYTHING!
MAYBE I SHOULDN'T HAVE TOLD THEM [redacted] WHY I WAS MISSING FOR SO LONG — THAT I WAS IN SPACE FIGHTING SCRULLS AS NOVA.

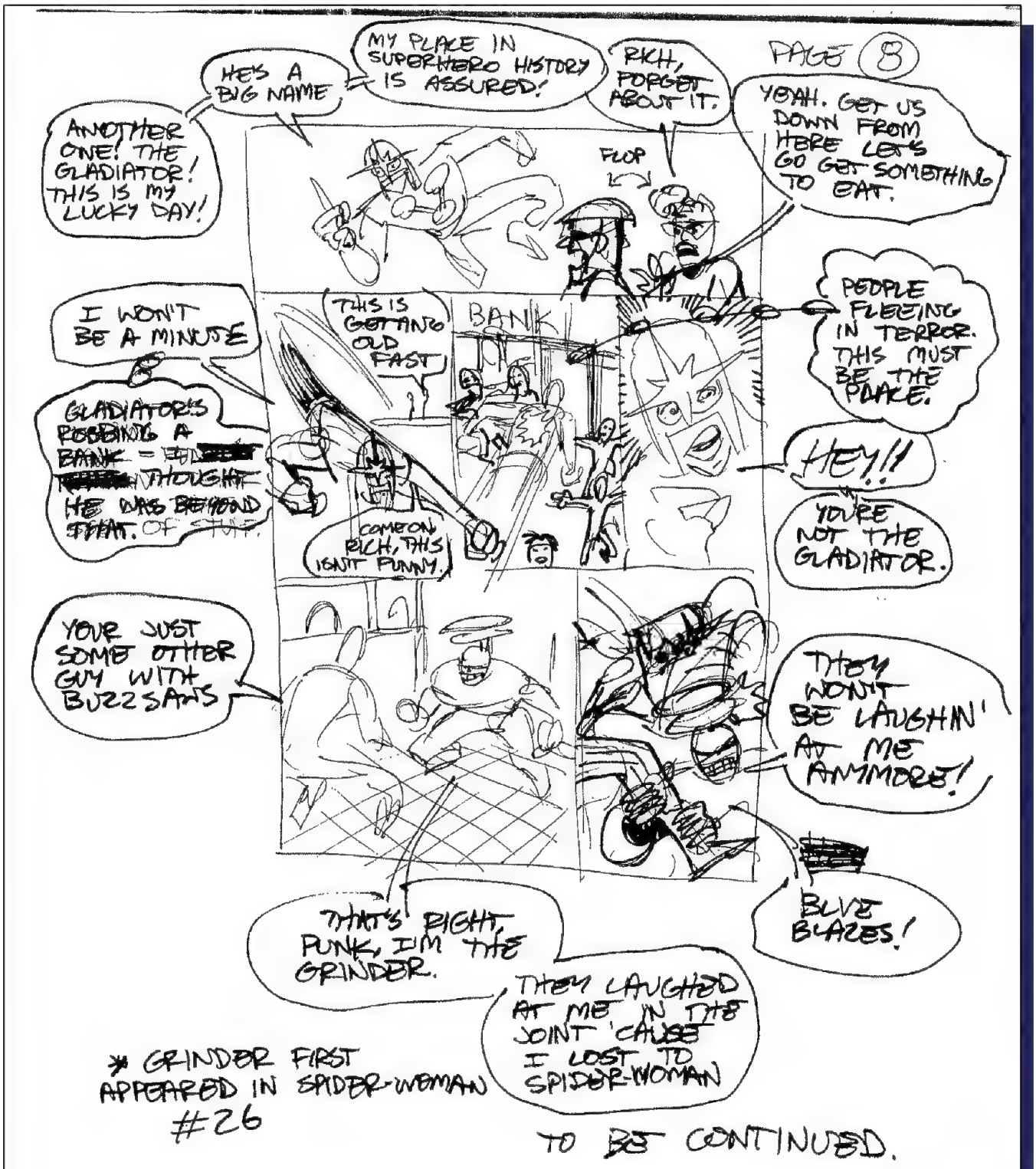

NOVA II
PAGE (3)
THIS IS NEAT RICH, I CAN SEE EVERYTHING
NOT SO FAST. DON'T DROP ME.
THIS IS SCARY
DO WE HAVE TO FLY SO HIGH?
YOU'LL GET USED TO IT
ULP.
DON'T LET GO.
WHY DON'T WE GO DOWN TO THE BAHAMAS OR SOMETHING?
I CAN'T SEE ANY CRIME FROM WAY UP HERE
HOW YOU EVER RUN INTO A CRIMINAL IS BEYOND ME.
ACTUALLY I'D LISTEN TO THE POLICE BAND THAT I'D RECIEVE OVER MY HELMET RADIO
NOT MUCH SO FAR.
LETS DROP BY RAYS PIZZA
I JUST PICKED UP SOMETHING. THE HOBGOBLIN'S BEEN SPOTTED IN THIS AREA.
HE'S A PRETTY MAJOR DUDE!
WHY DON'T WE JUST GO TO A BAD PART OF TOWN AND PICK FIGHTS WITH LOCAL TOUGHS?
I'M FAMISHED LET'S GOT SOMETHING TO EAT
WE'RE ON PATROL, NUCKLEHEAD.
LOOK! THERE HE IS.
I'LL PUT YOU GUYS DOWN ON A BUILDING. YOU CAN'T FLY AND I CAN'T FIGHT CARRYING YOU.

NOVA II
PAGE (4)
GO GET HIM, RICH
OKAY GUYS HOLD ON TO YOUR SOCKS NOVA'S GOING INTO ACTION!
NOVA, BUTTHEAD, NOVA. YOU DON'T WANT TO GIVE AWAY HIS SECRET.
OH. YEAH.
WEBBING.
THWIP!!
WHAT'S THAT?
HEY!
NOT BAD FIRST VILLAIN SINCE GETTING BACK MY POWERS AND IT'S A GUY PEOPLE HAVE HEARD OF.
NOVA! LONG TIME NO SEE, BUCKET HEAD.
HECK, SPIDER-MAN NEVER ACTUALLY BEAT HIM. WOULDN'T THAT BE A COUP IF I DRAGGED HIM INTO JAIL KICKING AND SCREAMING!
STAY OUT OF THE WAY, WOULDYA? THIS IS A GRUDGE MATCH.
UH.
SURE. FATS.
POW!!
HMMPH. [redacted] THIS IS JUST SWELL.
SIGH: OH WELL,
CURSES
CHEW ON THIS, HOBBY. I'VE GOT YOU THIS TIME!
I GUESS HE'S [redacted] ENTITLED

NOVA II
PAGE 5
THAT'S NOT HOW I HEAR IT, VITO
WORDS OUT THAT YOU ARE A BAD APPLE.
DIAMONDHEAD
THAT'S A LIE. I'M ON THE UP AND UP
BELIEVE ME.
NO! STAY BACK. I'VE BEEN SQUARE WITH THE FAMILY. I'VE DONE NOTHING WRONG.
ELSEWHERE:
MOBSTER
WHAM
YOU CAN ROT IN HELL YOU G#½!!
I'M SHOOTING WITH CHANGE
NOBODY CROSSES ME GOT IT?
WHATEVER YOU SAY, CREEP.
YOU'D LIKE TO GIVE ME A PRESENT
HOW TOUCHING
HE PUSHES HIS HAND THROUGH "VITO"
YOU'RE A DEAD MAN.
LOOK I'VE GOT MONEY,
I'M NOT FOR SALE, CREEP, NOT TO YOU.
DON'T SWEAT IT, RICH, WE'LL FIND ANOTHER BAD GUY
WHY DON'T YOU TRY OUT FOR BASEBALL, RICH?
A BETTER ONE
YOU'D BE IN THE MAJOR LEAGUES EASY.
HOBGOBLIN, WHO NEEDS HIM?
SURE BERNIE, THANKS.
SHUCKS.
YOU COULD GIVE US FREE TICKETS. YOU'D MAKE A TON OF DOUGH AND YOU COULD FORGET HUNTING DOWN BAD GUYS.

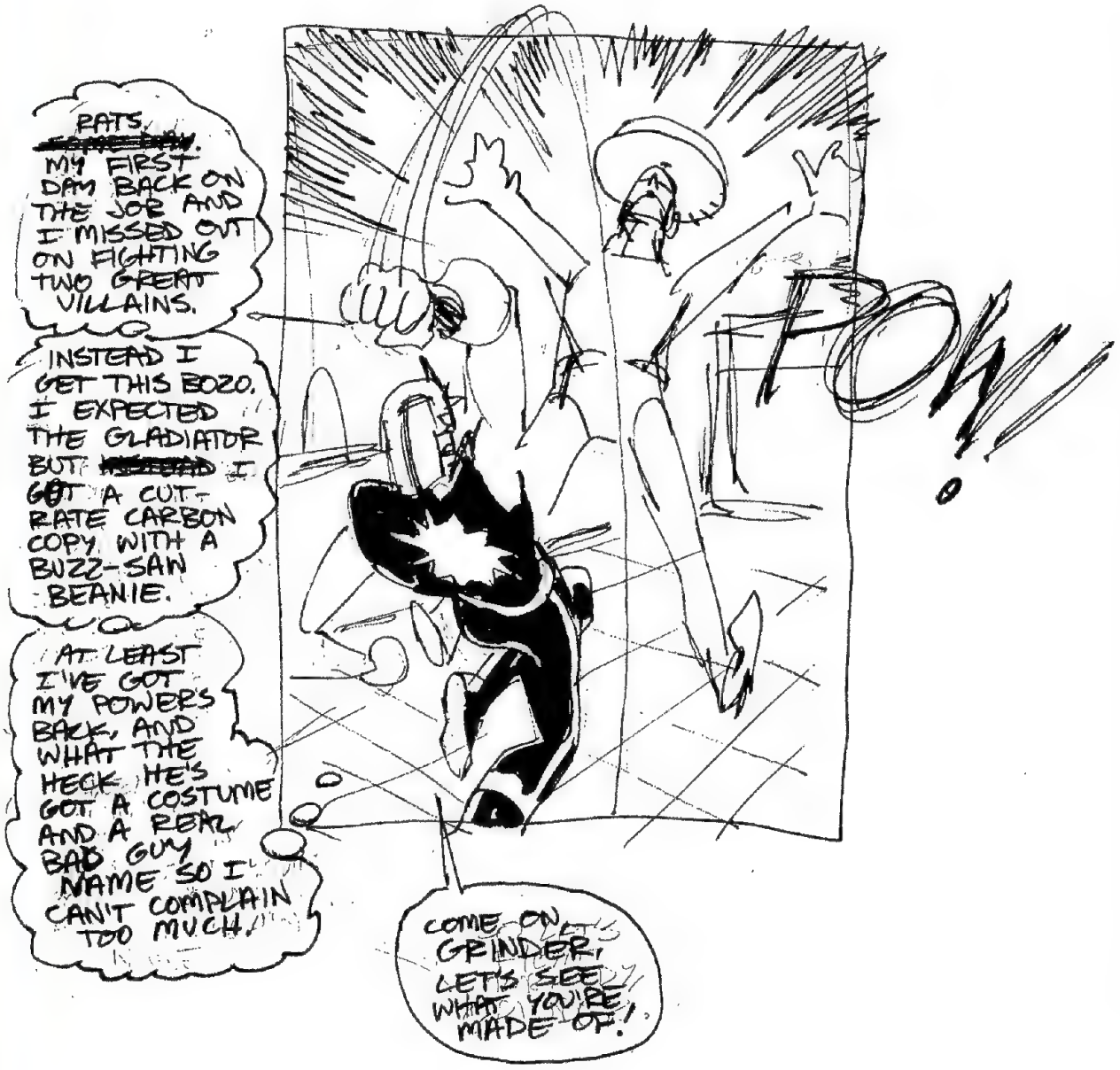

NOVA II
PAGE 6
THEN IT'S UP TO ME! WISH ME LUCK, FELLAS, THIS GUY'S SUPPOSED TO BE ~~ONE TOUGH~~ COOKIE!
WOW! I JUST HEARD THAT THE RHINO IS GOING ON A RAMPAGE IN MIDTOWN.
GOOD LUCK, RICH
BREAK A LEG, NOVA.
...UH GOOD LUCK
THE RHINO, WOW.
HE'S A HULK FOE, RIGHT?
WHAT IF HE DOES BREAK A LEG?
THE RHINO'S FOUGHT THE HULK
HE MIGHT EVEN DIE
WE'D BE STUCK ON THIS ROOF FOREVER.
AND THE HULK'S SUPPOSED TO BE DEAD I THOUGHT.
RICH IS NUTS. THAT GUY'S WAY TOO MEAN.
NOVA, HIT HIM FAST AND MAKE A RUN FOR IT!
DROP A FRIDGE ON HIM OR SOMETHING.
OUCH.
WATCH HIS HANDS
KEEP YOUR HEAD DOWN
LOOK OUT
POW!!


PAGE 7
NOW WHAT? HE'S GONE! WHAT ARE WE GOING TO DO NOW? WE'RE STUCK!
NOT NECESSARILY SOMEBODY'S BOUND TO HEAR US.
HOW LONG DO YOU THINK WE SHOULD WAIT BEFORE WE TRY AND LEAVE?
I DON'T WANT RICH TO THINK WE DON'T HAVE FAITH IN HIM - IF HE'S ALIVE THAT IS.
HE'S CRAZY HE'S EITHER DEAD ALREADY OR HE'LL GET HIMSELF KILLED SOON AND FOR WHAT?
BOY, LOOK AT HIM GO
HE'S GOING TO GET HIMSELF KILLED.
OUR MR. RIDER'S A HERO.' HE FIGHTS FOR FAME AND GLORY. [redacted] HE WANTS TO BE A BIG TIME SUPERHERO. HE'S SURE MADE THAT CLEAR ENOUGH ALL THIS TIME.
UH.
OH..UM.. MISS, NEED ANY HELP
RHINO YOU GOT IN YOUR SHOT NOW IT'S NOVA'S TURN! [redacted]
WHAT ABOUT US? WE'RE WITH HIM! WE COULD BE KIDNAPPED OR BEATEN! "NOVA'S PARTNERS HELD HOSTAGE" WE SHOULD'VE WORN SKI MASKS OR SOMETHING TO HIDE OUR IDENTITIES
HMMMM I HADN'T THOUGHT OF THAT BUT IF [redacted]
AH. HE'S BACK. GOOD.
THAT'S A RELIEF.
SHE HULK PUNCHING RHINO
NO. BUT I APPRECIATE THE OFFER.
I'M BACK STRUCK OUT AGAIN.
MAYBE YOU'RE RUSTY IT'S BEEN A WHILE
NOBODY KNOWS WHO WE ARE WE DON'T GET ANY BABES


PAGE 8
ANOTHER ONE! THE GLADIATOR! THIS IS MY LUCKY DAY!
HE'S A BIG NAME
MY PLACE IN SUPERHERO HISTORY IS ASSURED!
RICH, FORGET ABOUT IT.
FLOP
YEAH. GET US DOWN FROM HERE LET'S GO GET SOMETHING TO EAT.
I WON'T BE A MINUTE
GLADIATOR'S ROBBING A BANK = [redacted] THOUGHT HE WAS BEYOND THAT. OF STUFF.
THIS IS GETTING OLD FAST
BANK
PEOPLE FLEEING IN TERROR. THIS MUST BE THE PLACE.
HEY!!
COME ON RICH, THIS ISN'T FUNNY.
YOU'RE NOT THE GLADIATOR.
YOUR JUST SOME OTHER GUY WITH BUZZSAWS
THEY WON'T BE LAUGHIN' AT ME ANYMORE!
BLUE BLAZES!
THAT'S RIGHT, PUNK, I'M THE GRINDER.
THEY LAUGHED AT ME IN THE JOINT 'CAUSE I LOST TO SPIDER-WOMAN
* GRINDER FIRST APPEARED IN SPIDER-WOMAN #26
TO BE CONTINUED.

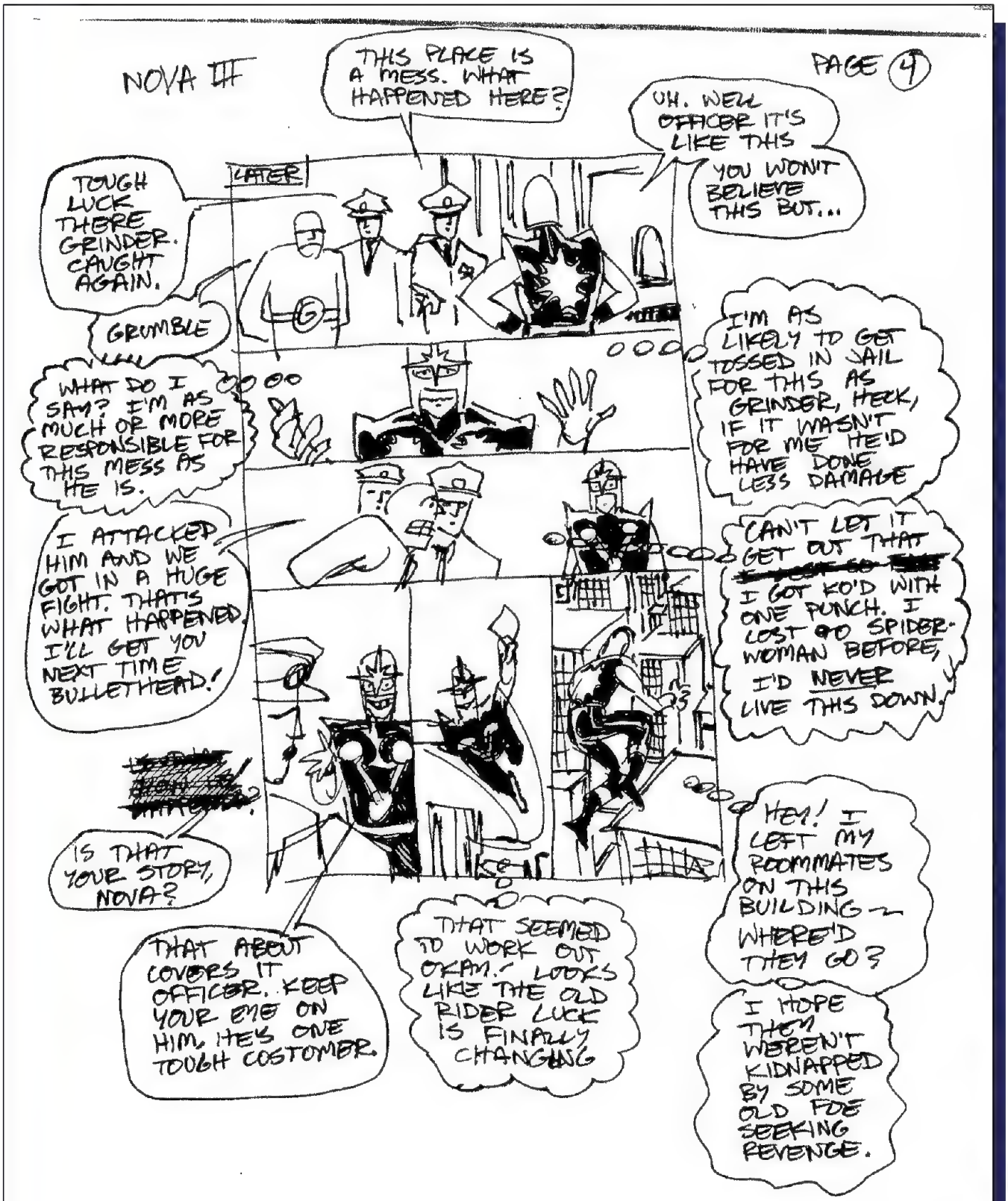
NOVA PART III

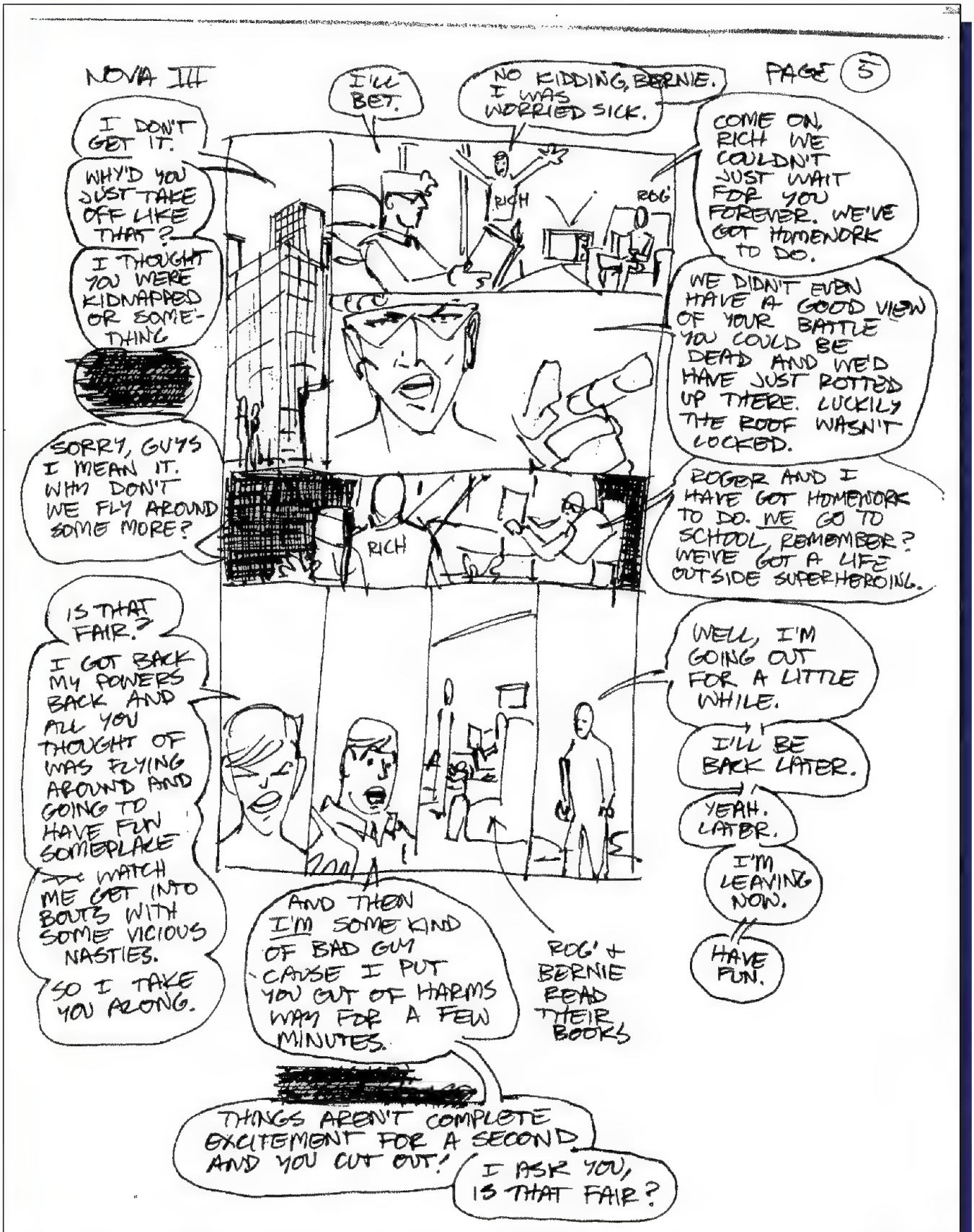
PAGE (1)

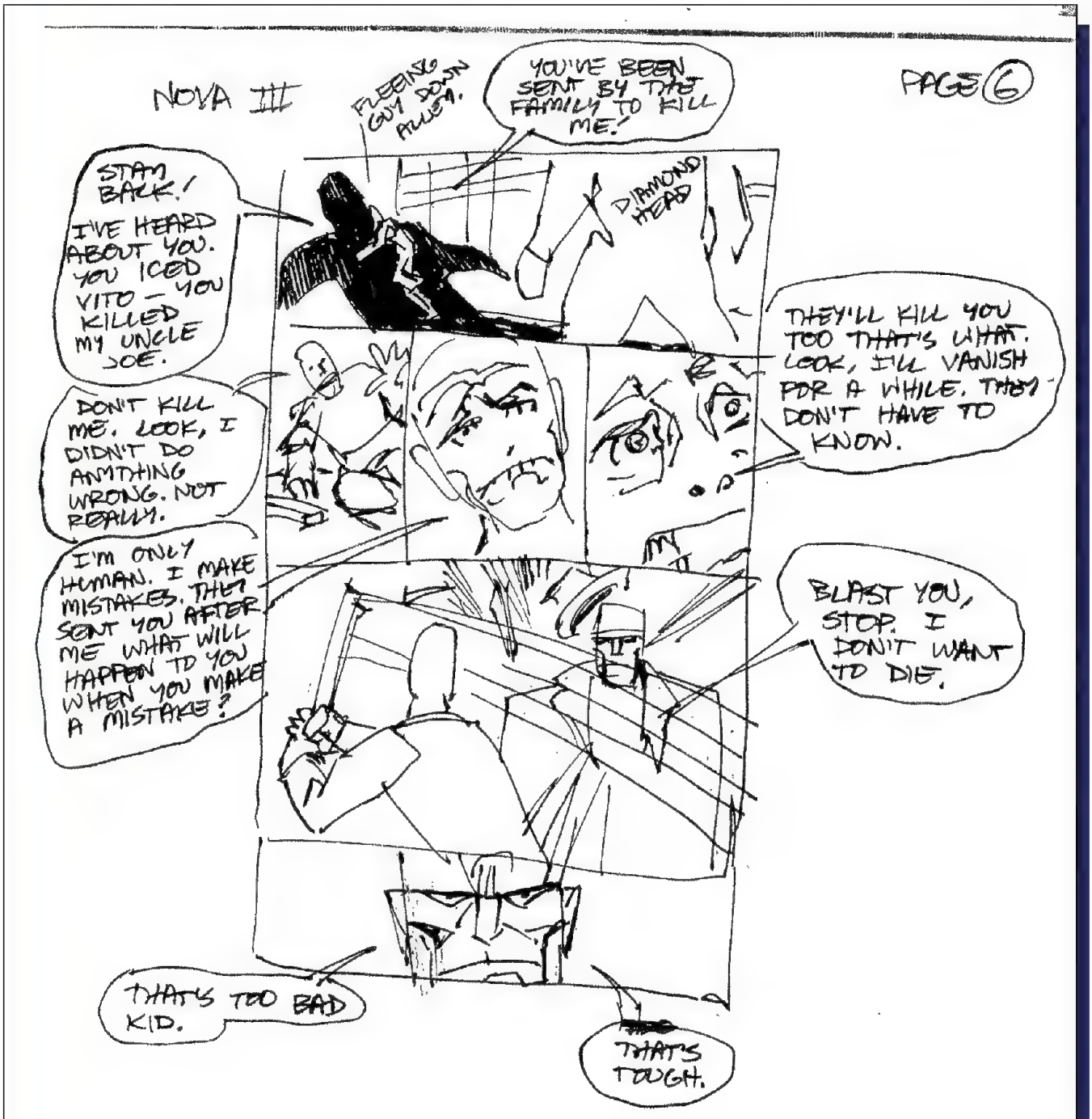

PATS. ~~COME ON~~. MY FIRST DAM BACK ON THE JOB AND I MISSED OUT ON FIGHTING TWO GREAT VILLAINS.
INSTEAD I GET THIS BOZO. I EXPECTED THE GLADIATOR BUT ~~INSTEAD~~ I GOT A CUT-RATE CARBON COPY WITH A BUZZ-SAW BEANIE.
AT LEAST I'VE GOT MY POWERS BACK, AND WHAT THE HECK, HE'S GOT A COSTUME AND A REAL BAD GUY NAME SO I CAN'T COMPLAIN TOO MUCH.
COME ON, GRINDER. LET'S SEE WHAT YOU'RE MADE OF!
POW!!

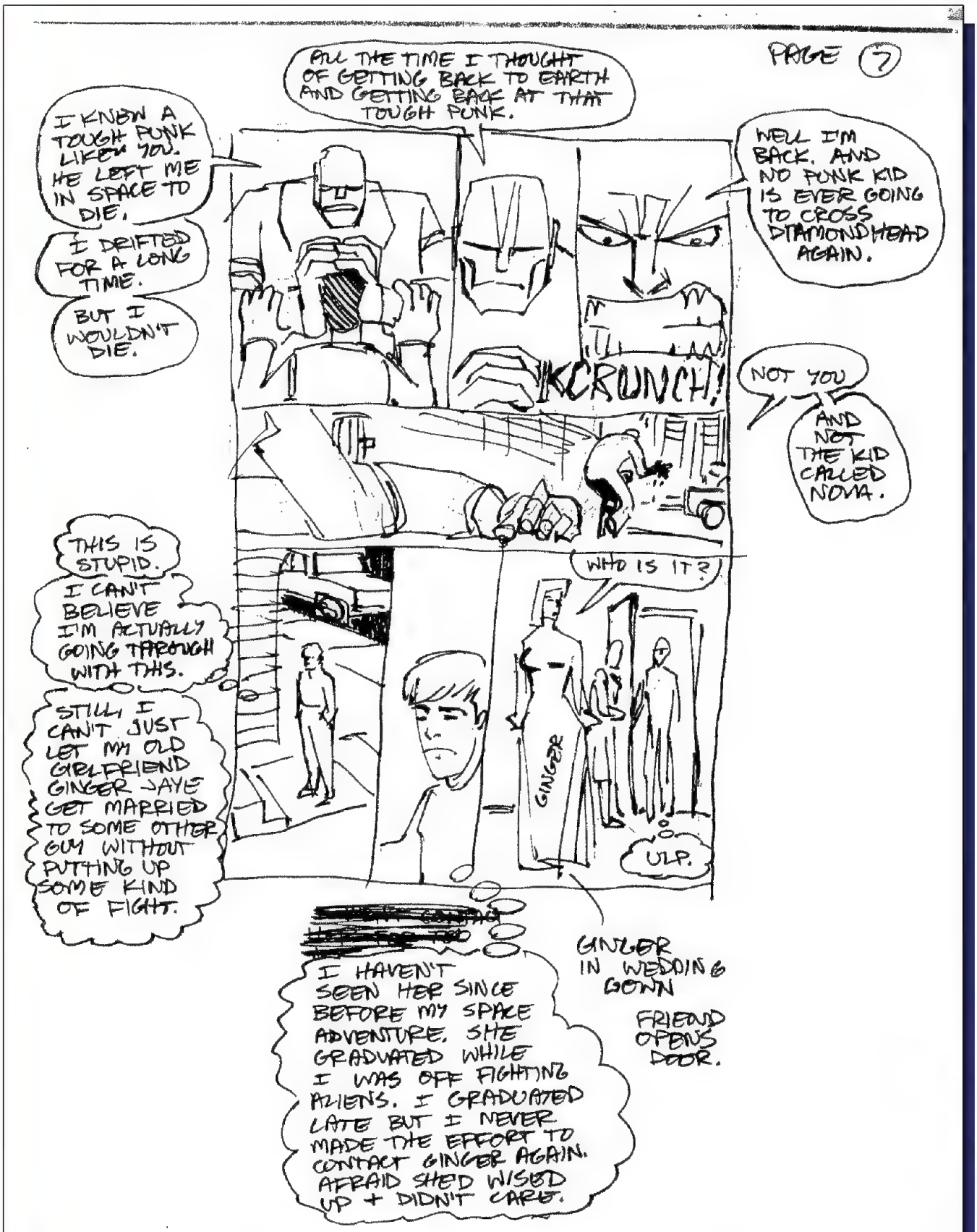
PAGE (2)
NOVA III
BANK
THE FIGHT'S OVER?
WHAT? THAT'S IT? THAT'S ALL?
I CAN'T BELIEVE IT. JUST MY LUCK HE FOLDED WITH ONE PUNCH.
ONE LOUSY PUNCH!
NIRRRRR
UH OH.
HEY, YOU OKAY?
WAKE UP.
ZZZZZZ
YIKES!
WATCH IT!
ULP.

NOVA III
PAGE (8)
WAKE UP, YOU IDIOT! SHUT THIS STUPID COSTUME OFF ALREADY!
THIS IS RIDICULOUS. HE'S WRECKING THE PLACE AND HE'S STILL UNCONSCIOUS!
GROAN.
WHAKK
WITH OR WITHOUT YOU THIS SPAWING IS GOING TO STOP!
CRASH!!
AHHA! I DON'T BELIEVE IT.
MONEY & STUFF FALLS OUT OF CUT OPEN SAFETY DEPOSIT BOX.
THIS ISN'T HAPPENING


NOVA III
PAGE (4)
THIS PLACE IS A MESS. WHAT HAPPENED HERE?
UH. WELL OFFICER IT'S LIKE THIS
YOU WON'T BELIEVE THIS BUT...
LATER
TOUGH LUCK THERE GRINDER. CAUGHT AGAIN.
GRUMBLE
WHAT DO I SAY? I'M AS MUCH OR MORE RESPONSIBLE FOR THIS MESS AS HE IS.
I'M AS LIKELY TO GET TOSSED IN JAIL FOR THIS AS GRINDER, HECK, IF IT WASN'T FOR ME HE'D HAVE DONE LESS DAMAGE
I ATTACKED HIM AND WE GOT IN A HUGE FIGHT. THAT'S WHAT HAPPENED. I'LL GET YOU NEXT TIME BULLETHEAD!
CAN'T LET IT GET OUT THAT I GOT KO'D WITH ONE PUNCH. I LOST TO SPIDER-WOMAN BEFORE, I'D NEVER LIVE THIS DOWN.
IS THAT YOUR STORY, NOVA?
THAT ABOUT COVERS IT OFFICER. KEEP YOUR EYE ON HIM, HE'S ONE TOUGH COSTOMER.
THAT SEEMED TO WORK OUT OKAY. LOOKS LIKE THE OLD RIDER LUCK IS FINALLY CHANGING
HEY! I LEFT MY ROOMMATES ON THIS BUILDING — WHERE'D THEY GO?
I HOPE THEY WEREN'T KIDNAPPED BY SOME OLD FOE SEEKING REVENGE.


NOVA III
PAGE 5
I'LL BET.
NO KIDDING, BERNIE. I WAS WORRIED SICK.
I DON'T GET IT.
WHY'D YOU JUST TAKE OFF LIKE THAT?
I THOUGHT YOU WERE KIDNAPPED OR SOMETHING
SORRY, GUYS I MEAN IT. WHY DON'T WE FLY AROUND SOME MORE?
RICH
ROG'
COME ON, RICH WE COULDN'T JUST WAIT FOR YOU FOREVER. WE'VE GOT HOMEWORK TO DO.
WE DIDN'T EVEN HAVE A GOOD VIEW OF YOUR BATTLE YOU COULD BE DEAD AND WE'D HAVE JUST ROTTED UP THERE. LUCKILY THE ROOF WASN'T LOCKED.
ROGER AND I HAVE GOT HOMEWORK TO DO. WE GO TO SCHOOL, REMEMBER? WE'VE GOT A LIFE OUTSIDE SUPERHEROING.
IS THAT FAIR?
I GOT BACK MY POWERS BACK AND ALL YOU THOUGHT OF WAS FLYING AROUND AND GOING TO HAVE FUN SOMEPLACE
WATCH ME GET INTO BOUTS WITH SOME VICIOUS NASTIES.
SO I TAKE YOU ALONG.
AND THEN I'M SOME KIND OF BAD GUY CAUSE I PUT YOU OUT OF HARMS WAY FOR A FEW MINUTES.
ROG' + BERNIE READ THEIR BOOKS
WELL, I'M GOING OUT FOR A LITTLE WHILE.
I'LL BE BACK LATER.
YEAH. LATER.
I'M LEAVING NOW.
HAVE FUN.
THINGS AREN'T COMPLETE EXCITEMENT FOR A SECOND AND YOU CUT OUT!
I ASK YOU, IS THAT FAIR?


NOVA III
PAGE 6
FLEEING GUY DOWN ALLEY.
YOU'VE BEEN SENT BY THE FAMILY TO KILL ME!
DIAMOND HEAD
STAY BACK! I'VE HEARD ABOUT YOU. YOU ICED VITO — YOU KILLED MY UNCLE JOE.
THEY'LL KILL YOU TOO THAT'S WHAT. LOOK, I'LL VANISH FOR A WHILE. THEY DON'T HAVE TO KNOW.
DON'T KILL ME. LOOK, I DIDN'T DO ANYTHING WRONG. NOT REALLY.
I'M ONLY HUMAN. I MAKE MISTAKES. THEY SENT YOU AFTER ME WHAT WILL HAPPEN TO YOU WHEN YOU MAKE A MISTAKE?
BLAST YOU, STOP. I DON'T WANT TO DIE.
THAT'S TOO BAD KID.
THAT'S TOUGH.


PAGE 7
ALL THE TIME I THOUGHT OF GETTING BACK TO EARTH AND GETTING BACK AT THAT TOUGH PUNK.
I KNOW A TOUGH PUNK LIKE YOU. HE LEFT ME IN SPACE TO DIE.
I DRIFTED FOR A LONG TIME.
BUT I WOULDN'T DIE.
WELL I'M BACK. AND NO PUNK KID IS EVER GOING TO CROSS DIAMOND HEAD AGAIN.
KCRUNCH!
NOT YOU
AND NOT THE KID CALLED NOVA.
THIS IS STUPID. I CAN'T BELIEVE I'M ACTUALLY GOING THROUGH WITH THIS.
STILL I CAN'T JUST LET MY OLD GIRLFRIEND GINGER JAYE GET MARRIED TO SOME OTHER GUY WITHOUT PUTTING UP SOME KIND OF FIGHT.
WHO IS IT?
GINGER
ULP.
I HAVEN'T SEEN HER SINCE BEFORE MY SPACE ADVENTURE. SHE GRADUATED WHILE I WAS OFF FIGHTING ALIENS. I GRADUATED LATE BUT I NEVER MADE THE EFFORT TO CONTACT GINGER AGAIN. AFRAID SHE'D WISED UP + DIDN'T CARE.
GINGER IN WEDDING GOWN
FRIEND OPENS DOOR.

PAGE 8
GINGER IT'S ME RICHARD. I'VE GOT TO TALK TO YOU.
RICHARD?
RICH. IT IS YOU. COME IN.
MARCY, COULD I TALK TO RICH ALONE.
OKAY, RICH. NOW TELL ME WHAT THIS IS ALL ABOUT!
ALONE? ARE YOU SURE?
I'M SURE. I'LL CALL YOU LATER.
UH. OKAY BYE
NICE MEETING YOU, RICH.
NICE SEEING YOU AGAIN, GINGER. IT'S BEEN A WHILE I'M SORRY I DIDN'T GET IN TOUCH WITH YOU SOONER.
I'M NOVA, GINGER.
I COULDN'T CONTACT YOU BECAUSE I WAS FIGHTING ALIENS IN OUTER SPACE.
BUT I'M BACK.
I STILL LOVE YOU.
YOU WERE GONE FOR SO LONG NOBODY KNEW WHERE YOU'D GONE.
I CALLED YOUR FOLKS. THEY DIDN'T KNOW
I THOUGHT YOU WERE DEAD.
THIS ISN'T EASY FOR ME GINGER.
CONTINUED.

NOVA
THE HUMAN ROCKET

ERIK LARSEN
[redacted] WORK
[redacted] HOME

THE STORY THUS FAR....

RICHARD RIDER ARRIVED BACK ON EARTH MINUS HIS NOVA POWERS ABOUT A YEAR AGO. HIS OLD SCHOOL CHUMS HAD GRADUATED SCHOOL WHILE HE WAS AWAY EXCEPT FOR HIS YOUNGER FRIEND ROGER COOPER. RICH GOES BACK TO SCHOOL + GRADUATES ALONG WITH ROGER. RICH'S OTHER BUDDY BERNIE DILLON CONVINCES THE TWO THAT THEY SHOULD ROOM WITH HIM + GO TO JUNIOR COLLEGE IN NEW JERSEY. THEY DO. RICH TELLS THEM BOTH ABOUT HIS HAVING BEEN NOVA. RICH WORKS AT A BURGER JOINT WITH BERNIE HE WASHES DISHES WHILE BERNIE COOKS. THEN ONE DAY ~ RICH GETS HIS POWERS BACK.

THIS SERIES WOULD FOLLOW A 5-PART STORY ALREADY IN THE WORKS FOR MARVEL COMICS PRESENTS THAT SERVES TO REVIVE THE CHARACTER.

THE FOCUS IS ON TEENAGED HIJINX IN JUNIOR COLLEGE, THREE ROOMMATES ONE A SEMI-INEPT SUPERHERO THE OTHERS PALS, ADVICE GIVERS, FAVOR SEEKERS AND OCCASIONAL FOILS. ~ I SEE NOVA AS BEING LIKE EARLY SPIDER-MAN — AND THAT'S CERTAINLY THE AUDIENCE I'M SHOOTING FOR. I WANT THE BOOK TO BE HIP + CONTEMPORARY. VERY MODERN. WHILE NOVA WOULD BE A SOLO BOOK, I SEE IT HAVING MUCH OF THE APPEAL OF A TEAM BOOK BECAUSE OF HIS SHARED SECRET WITH HIS ROOMMATES. THE THREE WOULD, IN A LIMITED SENSE, BE A TEAM IN THAT THERE WOULD BE COMRADERY + HIS FRIENDS COULD COVER FOR HIM OR GO ON PATROL WITH HIM OR ADVENTURES OR ON VACATION. ALSO, STORIES MIGHT SPRING FROM ROGER OR BERNIE'S ACTIONS AS MUCH AS RICH'S.

AND AS FOR THOSE ADVENTURES ... I SEE NOVA AS BEING THE KIND OF GUY WHO WOULD LOVE TO TACKLE DR. DOOM OR GALACTUS BUT WOULD BE

UNABLE TO REALLY GIVE THEM ANY KIND OF RUN FOR THEIR MONEY. NOVA'S REALLY ONLY BRIGHT ENOUGH + STRONG ENOUGH TO TAKE ON LESSER VILLAINS LIKE GOODY-TWO-SHOES OR PASTE-POT PETE. IN A TYPICAL STORY HE MIGHT RUN INTO THE RHINO OR DOC. OCK AND GET TROUNCED THEN SLINK AWAY TO BATTLE SOME LESSER BADDIE. HE MIGHT OCCASIONALLY LUCK INTO BEATING A BIGGIE BUT IT'S LIKELY TO TURN OUT THAT SOMEBODY ELSE GETS THE CREDIT OR SAVES HIM. I'D GO FOR A BROAD RANGE OF VILLAINS FROM SILLY TO QUITE VICIOUS + DEADLY, I'D VARY IT ENOUGH THAT NO ONE ADVENTURE COULD REALLY BE CONSIDERED TYPICAL, OFTEN HUMOROUS IN TONE, I WOULDN'T FALL INTO THE JUSTICE LEAGUE RUT OF GAG-A-PAGE-NOTHING-TOO-SERIOUS — THAT WEARS THIN FAST. MOST VILLAINS WOULD BE NEW — TOO MANY GUYS ARE JUST RECYCLING OLD CHARACTERS + PLOTS AND I'D RATHER GIVE SOMETHING BACK. THE STORIES WOULD BE A MIX — A GOOD LONG BRAWL ONE ISSUE, OVER HIS HEAD THE NEXT, EASILY TROUNCING A PUTZ THE FOLLOWING.

THE CAST

RICHARD RIDER: NOVA. MORE GUTS THAN BRAINS. HEADSTRONG, FORGETFUL, LITTLE SENSE OF DIRECTION OUTSIDE NEW YORK/JERSEY AREA. USUALLY LATE. NO GIRL-FRIEND AT THIS POINT — HAVE HIM "PLAY FIELD" FOR A YEAR OR SO. WASHES DISHES FOR A LIVING AT A BURGER JOINT.

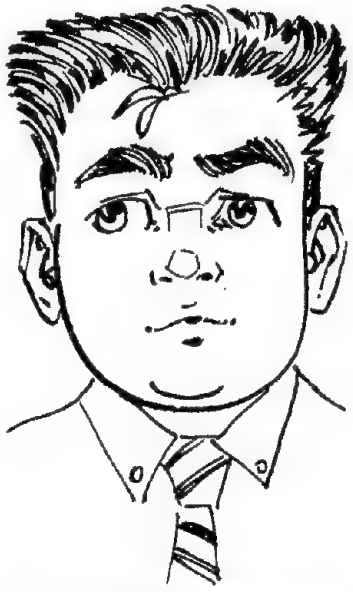
BERNIE DILLON: ROOMMATE. HE'S CHANGED SOME AFTER A YEAR IN THE DORMS WITH LOUD MUSIC, CHEAP BEER + FAST WOMEN. HE'S A WISE-CRACKING LADIES' MAN WHOSE OVERLAPPING DATES LEAD TO COMPLICATIONS. HE WANTS TO SHOW FRIENDS THE ROPES + USES NOVA TO FURTHER HIS OWN ENDS. HE WORKS, AS A COOK, WITH RICH.

ROGER COOPER: ROOMMATE. SHORT, BUT TRIES TO LOOK MORE ADULT BY "DRESSING OLD" HE'S ABANDONED THE CAP THAT GAVE HIM HIS "CAPS" KNICKNAME. SHY AROUND GIRLS. HE'S A SPORTS FAN AND FRUSTRATED WOULD BE BASEBALL STAR WHO LACKS ATHLETIC SKILLS. ROG' WORKS AT A SPORTING GOODS STORE.

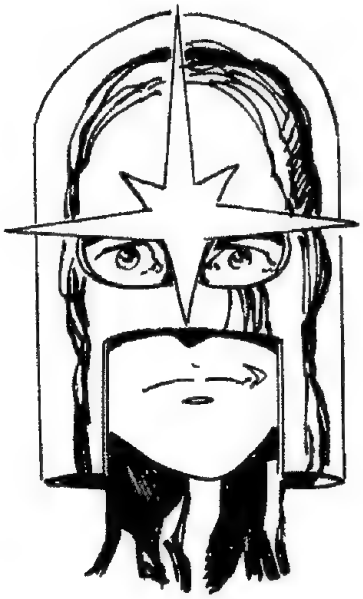
OTHER CAST MEMBERS WOULD INCLUDE WAITRESS DEBBIE ROGERS, VARIOUS TEACHERS, THEIR BOSS AND SOME POLICE CONTACT.

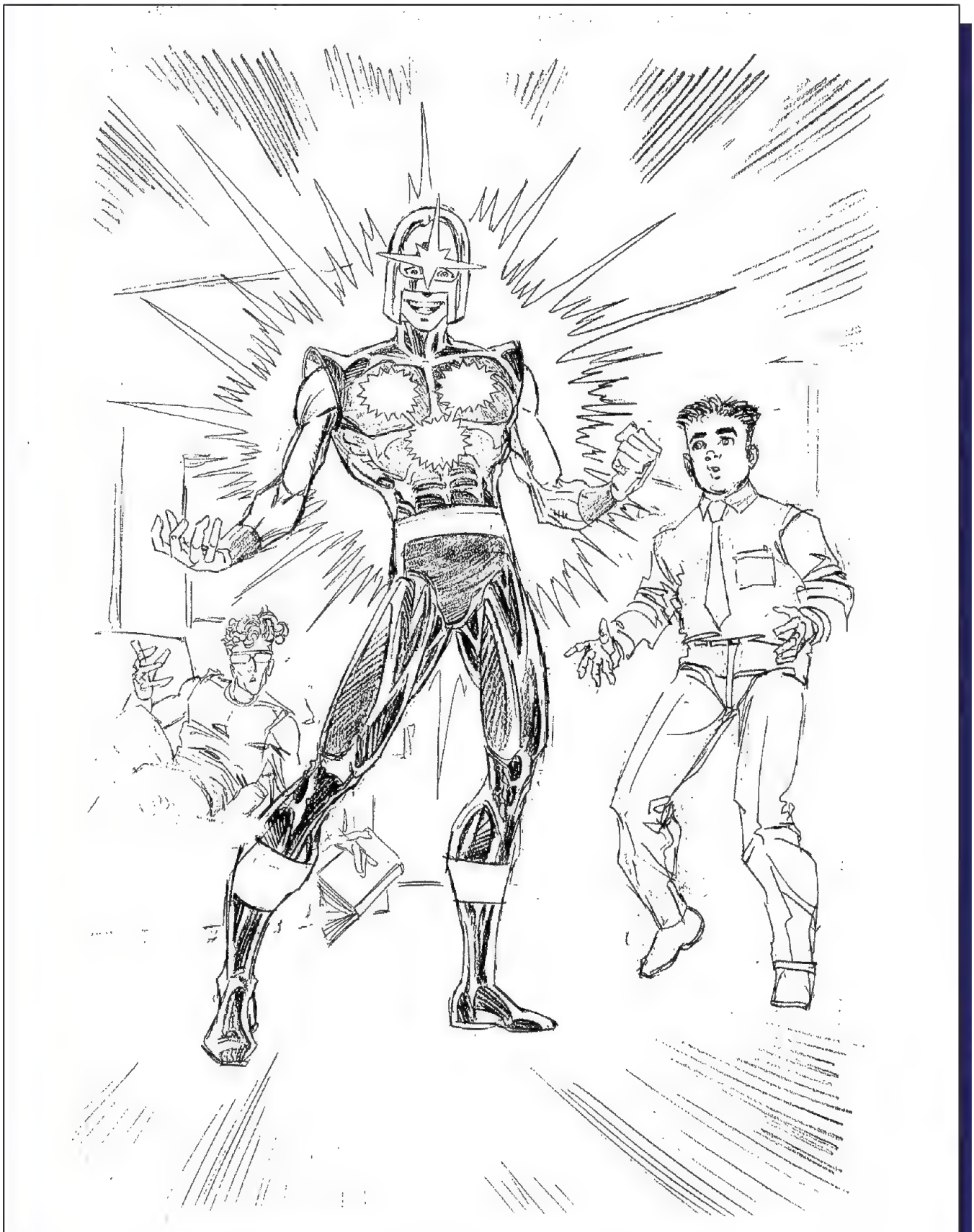
RICHARD RIDER

BERNIE DILLON



ROGER COOPER



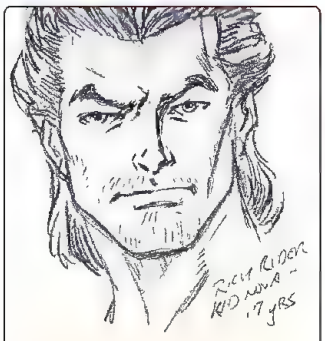


Nova Sketchbook

When Tom DeFalco and artist Ron Frenz created their team of teenage heroes, they chose to call them The Young Warriors. It was later changed to the New Warriors. Below are the design sheets for Nova (originally named Kid Nova) by artist Ron Frenz and regular NW series artist Mark Bagley.

Ron Frenz's designs for 'Kid Nova' and the 'Young Warriors'

The only major difference between Ron Frenz's original design and Mark Bagley's is in the color of Nova's armbands.Frenz's appear red. Bagley's appear yellow.



Above is a headshot of Richard Rider by Bagley.

A change he made from this sketch to the one on the right is Rich's age.

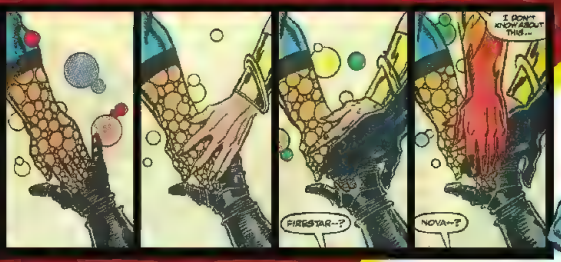
Above, he notes that Rich is 17. In the other sketch, he has Nova listed as 18 (missing from the scan).

He also has removed Kid from Nova's name.

Mark Bagley's version of the New Warriors

Nova and The Imbeciles New Warriors

A Personal Reflection by Marvel Assoc. Editor Ben Morse



WHAT DO WE CALL OURSELVES?
HOW ABOUT THE "IMBECILES"?!
COS I MUST BE CRAZY TO BE DOING THIS!
I HEARD A REPORTER CALL US SOMETHING KINDA COOL...
...HOW ABOUT...
THE NEW WARRIORS
THAT'S IT. END OF DISCUSSION.

I was just a kid when I started reading about them, but even then I knew that once I was a bit older, the New Warriors were the type of people I'd love to hang out with.

Before the New Warriors, there was a pretty distinct reason why young groups of heroes would get together in comics. The Young Allies were teamed up because of World War II. The Teen Titans were all sidekicks for the Justice League and thus almost part of an afterschool program. The New Mutants were literally a school class. Even the Legion of Super-Heroes, despite having a varied and diverse roster, was governed by a charter and oversight from the United Planets.

All these teams were cool, but they felt more like the Spanish Club or the Boy Scouts—they were activities your parents made you do to meet other kids your own age or simply because they didn't always have time to look out for you.

The New Warriors were just a group of young men and women with not a lot in common other than wanting to be heroes and having nowhere else to go. They would become friends—and even a surrogate family—but they started out as the type of rag tag crew your average comic book reader—such as yours truly—could easily see themselves in.

Night Thrasher formed the group to further his own agendas, but it became pretty clear pretty quick that he didn't have much of a long term formal agenda beyond "let's fight crime." Marvel Boy had failed to make the Avengers, so this was almost like the high school quarterback figuring out his place after not making the college team. Firestar had been—Pardon the pun—burned by her Hellions experience and just needed support, plus she had a crush on Marvel Boy. Namorita wanted friends who weren't her cousins. Speedball would be a part of any group that would take him.

And then there was Nova.

Prior to the New Warriors being formed, Rich Rider was at the nadir of his personal and professional life. He had left Earth for several years to help out as Nova in Xandar's war against the Skrulls, then after helping claim that victory, was sent home with no powers and having missed out on graduating high school. All his friends had moved on to college or other endeavors, while Rich was stuck literally flipping burgers and living with his parents. He had gone from comic book wish fulfillment to every man's worst nightmare realized on the page.

Fortunately for Rich, Night Thrasher showed up, gambled that throwing him off a roof would make him Nova again, he joined the New Warriors, and the rest as they say is history.

Did You Know? Night Thrasher's roof drop wasn't the only reason Rich Rider's powers came back. Xandar's Queen Adora had reactivated his Nova Matrix shortly before the plunge. Whether the Nova powers would have kicked in without Adora's help remains unknown. *(Panel from New Warriors #1)*

With the Warriors, Rich grew into himself as a hero and a man the way he never had before. Among a group of friends who could relate to his entire self in a way Ginger, Bernie and Caps never could, he shed the image of a high school underachiever and became a leader. It may have been the 90's talking, but certainly positive reinforcement from peers who knew what it was like to deal with the trials Rich faced and looked to him as a heavy hitter rather than a dude running out of the soda shop for unexplained reasons helped forge the kinda cocky but kind beneath it all Nova I personally grew to—and continue to—love.

I have a lot of fond memories of organized groups I was a part of, from my high school wrestling team to when I was a camp counselor to working on my college newspaper. However, when I truly think back to the friends who have meant the most to me and continue to be a major part of my life, I think of the people who I gravitated to not because we necessarily shared a task or goal that needed accomplishing, but the folks I clicked with personally for reasons I can't explain. I met my best buddies simply by being interested in similar things and having complementary senses of humor and what was right; we ended up accomplishing a lot together not because we set out to, but because we couldn't help it. I became a far better person through those associations.

The New Warriors were a team that didn't necessarily make sense on paper, but are fondly remember to this day because they fit in ways nobody could have predicted. They began as a grouping of people looking to make a difference even if they didn't know why and ended up as each other's closest confidantes.

Nova was always awesome, but I don't think he'd have become the character he became without having being part of that magic.

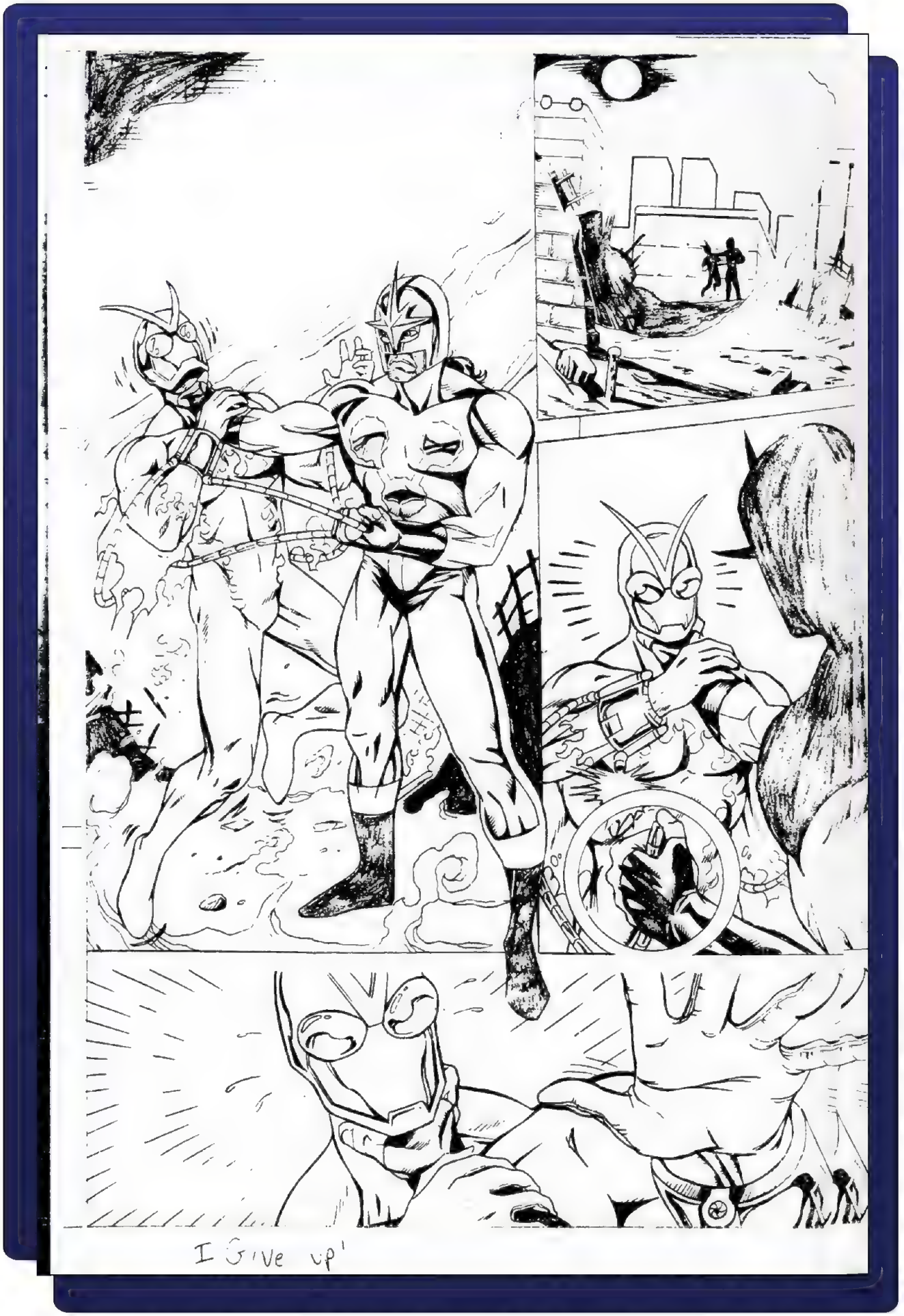
*An ad for the DVD set of the New Warriors reality show done in 2005. * This product exists only in the Marvel Universe.*

Special 2 Disc DVD Limited Edition
THE NEW WARRIORS - THE COMPLETE SERIES
The New Warriors
THE COMPLETE SERIES
MARVEL
"A SERIES SO CONTROVERSIAL, IT COULD LEAD TO A CIVIL WAR!"
- MU Guide
THE NEW WARRIORS!!
THE COMPLETE SERIES
Special 2 Disc Set Includes:
* Every episode of the series including the tragic series finale in Stamford, Connecticut
* Commentary from Executive Producer Zeb Wells and Producer Ashley Brothers
* Deleted Scenes and Gag Reel
* Includes the documentary "Down To Reality: The Impact of the New Warriors TV Show on Super-Heroes & Society"
Coming Soon To DVD - Order Yours Today!

What Might Have Been

Around 1993, a New Warriors story was written by Fabian Nicieza and drawn by Manny Malan. The dialogue was done by Dan Slott. The story featured the New Warriors having a poker game together while Nova and Laura Dunham went on a date. The date was interrupted by Nova's old foe, Firefly.

Remove Red Lines



Special thanks to Marvel Comics and Manny Malin for their permission to print these pages!

Unused page 4 from Nova #14 by Chris Marrinan

Nova Space

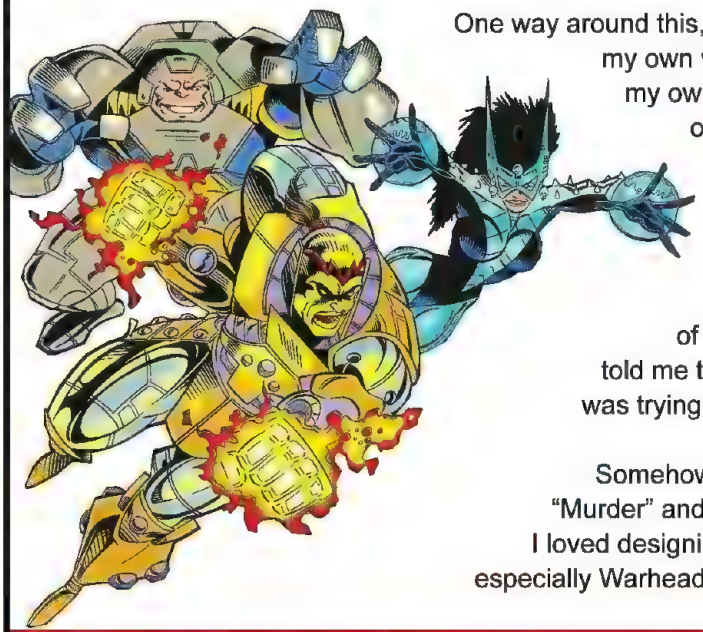
By Chris Marrinan

I'd been penciling Spiderman titles off and on, thanks largely to editor Danny Fingeroth's support and encouragement, when Danny offered me the opportunity to be the regular penciler for the reintroduction of Nova in his own comic.

I'd enjoyed Marv Wolfman's original run, especially the early issues drawn by my idol and inspiration John Buscema, and bought every issue as they came out, so I definitely had an interest in the character. I was glad Fabian Nicieza brought him back in New Warriors, with the further development of Rich Rider's character, and interaction with teammates, but I always pictured him in more of a starring role. I'd already guest penciled one issue of New Warriors, #24, featuring Nova, which was a real blast, but never dreamed that in 2 years, I'd be asked to be the regular penciler in the Human Rocket's new ongoing series! I was gratified to be a part of this momentous opportunity to draw a new ongoing title beginning with the #1 issue, and was really motivated to do my best to make this a successful run.

It was fun drawing Fabian's stories, and having a fair amount of artistic freedom. I liked Fabian's approach to Nova, basically as a regular guy, dealing with having incredible powers; both the sheer exuberant thrill of it, and the fear of potential disaster inherent in being an alien powered "hero". I got to design the updated version of Nova's enemy, Condor, which I felt came out pretty well. You really can't go wrong with a bad guy with talons and wings, but I wanted him to look modern and lethal, more than just a guy in tights.

Fabian, being a talented writer, had some cool plot threads going, and I wished I had his gift for story structure, and meaningful dialog. I was therefore pleasantly surprised to be offered the chance to write the series. I quickly put together a plot outline, extending for, I believe the next 10 or 12 issues. Some of the ideas for these were frankly just thrown together in a rush, and I had no idea if I'd actually be able to make all the events in these stories flow together smoothly. One thing new writers learn when they want to guest star other characters or villains in their comic, is that other editors and writers may have some proprietary hold on said character, for use in *their* books, and I'd have to factor in some other guest star, tailoring the script accordingly.



One way around this, as I'd learned from my pal Erik Larsen, was to just make up my own villains. This worked out pretty well, as I was able to develop my own storyline around them, and not worry about interfering with other people's plotlines with established Marvel baddies. This was how the terrible trio dubbed "Shatterforce" came about.

I should mention that Fingeroth's assistant Rob Tokar, a really great guy, very supportive of my ideas, took over as editor shortly after Nova debuted. I'd named the leader of the trio "Warhead", and before the story was published, Rob told me that another writer, I think from one of the Marvel UK comics, was trying to get a proprietary hold on the Warhead name for his story.

Somehow, Rob prevailed, and Shatterforce, which included members "Murder" and "Strangler" became a pain in Nova's butt for several issues. I loved designing, writing and drawing these gleefully malicious characters, especially Warhead, who sprang unannounced from a doodle in my sketchbook.

I had fun with those stories, and along with Shatterforce, introduced this larger background entity known as the "Shadow Consortium" a kind of evil cabal with grand designs to control world events and, of course do fun stuff like fight superheroes, and consort with malicious aliens. From the start, of my tenure as writer, I wanted Nova involved in situations that put his outer space legacy to work, so having adventures in near Earth orbit, and later on fighting alien forces seemed like a natural choice. I also wanted to emulate the freewheeling mayhem of Marv Wolfman's Nova run, and packed in guest stars when possible, including, of course, the New Warriors, and later She-Hulk, the Thing, Ant-Man, and characters who turned out to be robots of the Hulk and Dr Doom.

An important lesson I learned from writing these stories was that it's fairly easy to come up with a schedule of a series' "Timeline" outlining a year's worth of plots, or even outline a plot for a single issue, and quite another to tie all these events together, and get characters reasonably from point A to point B. You need to keep in mind the personalities and relationships already established, and in the case of characters shared with other titles, avoid screwing up their continuity if at all possible.

FEELING POWERLESS?
YOU TOOK IT ALL.
YOU TOOK IT ALL AWAY!
Do you feel...
- authority figures don't appreciate you?
- the team leader took your talents (and helmet) so he could get the credit while claiming it was to "save the universe"?
- helpless to prevent it again?
If you've had enough, try...
POWER LOCK!
Power Lock uses special "matrix enhancers" to keep your power with you!
Our very powerful nano-inhibitors also prevent outside agents and internal AI systems from leaving you with that "naked" feeling ever again!
TRY IT TODAY!
POWER LOCK
"I SWEAR BY IT." NOVA
POWER LOCK
PROTEIN SUPPLEMENT

As the series progressed, I was having a real kick putting Nova into more outer space situations, and the Shadow Consortium tied into them, taking on a larger role than originally planned. I also needed to resolve Fabian's Nova 0:0 plotline, and was hard pressed to figure that one out. I enjoyed the way it played out, although I'd have liked to end it with a more unique conclusion. I wanted to make more use of the Corruptor, as re-imagined by Fabian, and Diamondhead, for whom I had plans in a whole new storyline, expanding on the first series' final story, involving other of Marv's Nova supporting cast getting mixed up in a Skrull war. A hint of this is revealed in a flashback (my Nova #10) from Nova's until then suppressed memory.

These grandiose plans had to be shelved, perhaps indefinitely, as the title's declining sales resulted in its cancellation, and I had to wrap up the storyline, leaving some dangling plotlines. At the end of my run, Marvel had me do a re-design of the Nova costume, to be used by some new character whose name I forget, who would get the Nova powers *(Editor's Note: Nova Omega)*. That final issue, I believe #18, was written by a different writer, and I don't think that revamped Nova lasted very long in Marvel continuity.

The original Nova keeps coming back, in some form or other, and probably will survive many more "re-boots" as he has an enduring quality that I think appeals to the kid in all of us, who can see him or herself in that hero's shoes, yet with the power to fly, topple buildings, and defeat armies.

Chris Marrinan

What Might Have Been

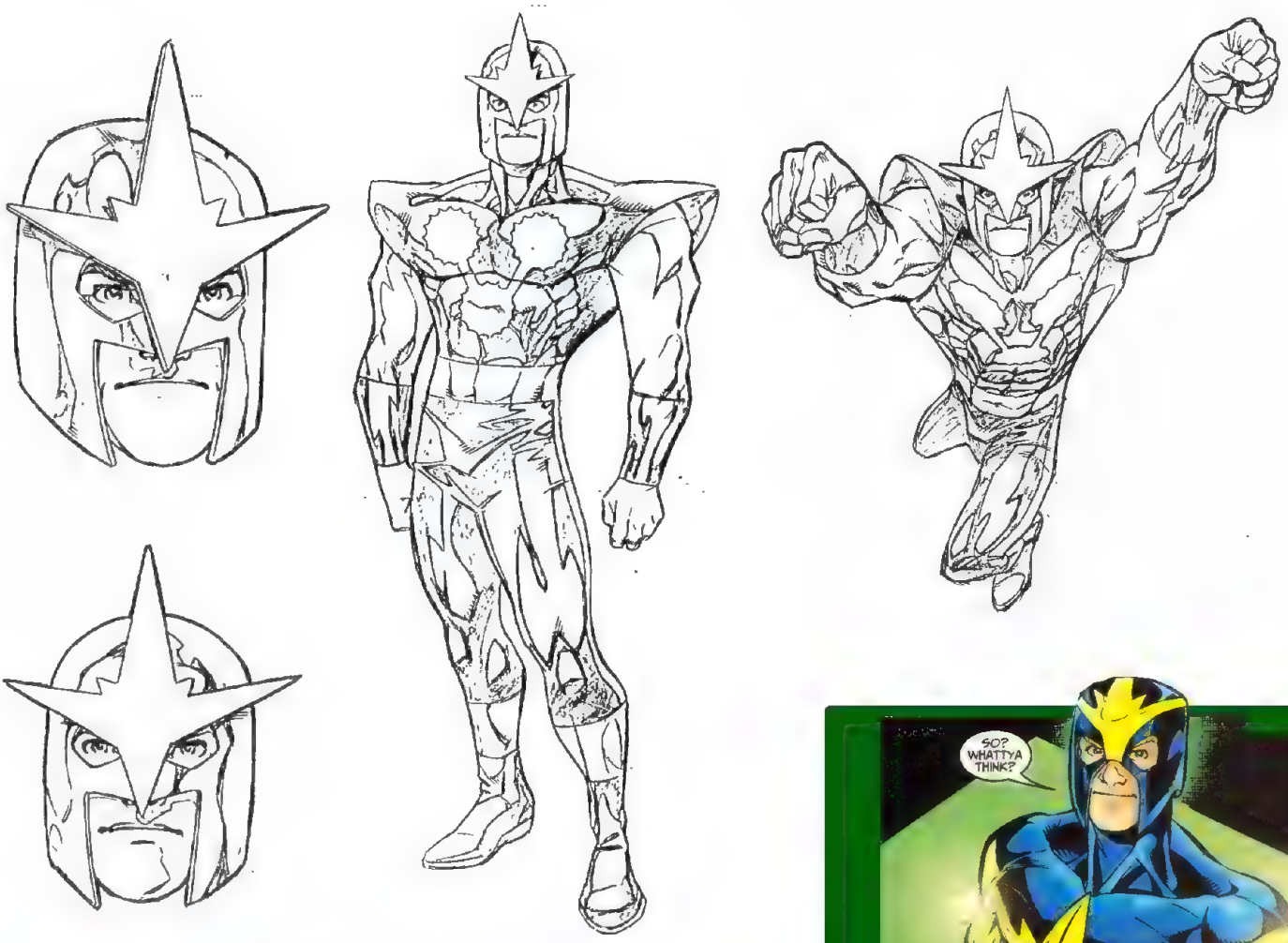
Around 1997, a New Defenders series was proposed to Marvel with art by former Nova: The Human Rocket artist Joe Bennett. The art features Namorita and BOTH Novas (Rich Rider and Frankie Raye)! Joe recalls: "This was a tryout for a new series called THE NEW DEFENDERS. It was a crazy dream...

...of a mad man, that I did for a friend. In the end to all this was a great big NO to the dream. I did two pages and a cover, I think almost 11 years ago (around 1997). It was never published by Marvel, they ignored it."

Cover scan courtesy of Peter Legare

Nova Sketchbook

After receiving approval for a new New Warriors series, a set of costume designs was commissioned from artist Steve Scott. The directive for new costumes on the New Warriors came from series editor, Bobbi Chase. After some thought and working out a design (see opposite page), Steve Scott came up with a very different look for Nova (pictured lower right). Due to heavy fan disapproval, Nova went back to his original uniform in New Warriors #6 v2.The following pages feature some of Steve Scott's sketches:



Nova (in his classic uniform)

The final approved design (right) made its first appearance on the cover of New Warriors #0 - a promotional issue published by Marvel and Wizard magazine. The first appearance in a story of the uniform was in New Warriors #1 v2. It was no longer used as of New Warriors #6 v2.

N/A
NOVA STUDY
OK, I LOVE THE ORIGINAL COSTUME BUT I THINK I CAN MAKE THIS ONE WORK
AND HAVE FUN DOING IT.
OUCH! THAT WOULD HURT.
COVER STUDY FOR ISSUE #0
NOVA WITH CAPE
HE IS, AFTERALL, NOVA PRIME. WOULD LOOK REGAL (AND WOULD BE FUN TO DRAW TOO)

The New Warriors

The following article is the original proposal submitted to Marvel by Writer Jay Faerber. Jay eventually received the writing assignment for New Warriors Volume 2.

It's fascinating to read the original pitch for the series and compare it to the series eventually published in 1999.

Introduction by Jay Faerber:

I wrote the following New Warriors pitch over twelve years ago. Most writers I know have a hard time reading something they wrote last month, much less over a decade ago. We have a tendency to see the flaws, and to second guess ourselves and see stuff we wish we would've done differently. So a lot of that stuff went through my mind as I read over this proposal, which I hadn't seen in years.

For one thing, this is NOT what a comic book proposal looks like. Or at least, it's not what one SHOULD look like. It's way, way too long. And way, way too detailed. In the ensuing 12+ years since I wrote this pitch, I learned the value of leaving yourself room to come up with stuff on the fly. I know fans hate to hear that -- fans want to hear that everything is planned out from the beginning, down to the last detail. It happens to me, too. When I found out that the producers of 24 never had a plan for each season -- that they were basically just making it up as they went along -- it really turned me off.

But now that I have a little more experience under my belt, I can appreciate the need to keep your stories adaptable. You never know when two characters are going to have a chemistry that you couldn't predict. Or, more likely, you never know when your story will be derailed because of some big universe-spanning crossover. Look at this pitch -- I laid out twelve issues, plus an Annual. When's the last time any Marvel or DC comic run uninterrupted for twelve straight issues?

God, I must sound so bitter. But I'm not. The original New Warriors series is one of my all-time favorite comics, and it was literally a dream assignment to land that gig. Problem is, I'd only been writing comics for maybe a year before I got this chance. And I wasn't ready. I was too raw, too inexperienced. What I did have, however, was pure, unfiltered enthusiasm. And that's what really shines through in this pitch. Look at it -- I poured so much energy into this thing, so much passion, it's practically overflowing. So even if I didn't have all the skills and refinement as a writer, I did have an affection for the characters that can't be faked. And I still do.

-- Jay Faerber
Los Angeles, 2011

The Series At A Glance:

New Warriors v2 ran from 1999 to 2000 with a total of 11 issues (#0 - #10). #0 was a promotional issue distributed by Wizard.

The team's line-up included Nova, Speedball, Namorita, Bolt, Turbo, Aegis and eventually Night Thrasher.

The series was written by Jay Faerber with art by artists Steve Scott, Karl Kerschl and Jamal Igle and edited by Bobbie Chase.

NEW WARRIORS
Proposal for a New Series
Prepared for Tim Touhy & Julio Soto
by Jay Faerber
10-22-98

THE PITCH

NEW WARRIORS is about a group of Marvel's teenage super-heroes who are out to change the world - no matter whose heads they have to bust to do it!

Comprised of former Warriors and existing, underused teens from every corner of the Marvel Universe, NEW WARRIORS is a super-team comic with an edge, as our characters grapple not only with super-villains, but also with social and political issues, examining how such issues relate to young people today. Tack on super-powers to the already-conflicted state of mind (and emotions) that accompanies such a transition, and you have the New Warriors!

No RULES
No MENTORS
No PROBLEM!

WHAT MAKES IT COOL?

Like its predecessor, and DC's current revival of their TITANS series, NEW WARRIORS will appeal to readers because its diversity is its strength. With connections to the X-Men, the Avengers, Spider-Man, the Silver Surfer, and the Fantastic Four, NEW WARRIORS has the best of all worlds.

When NEW WARRIORS Volume 1 debuted, no one had any interest in the likes of Marvel Boy, Namorita, Speedball, Firestar, or Nova. Through deft writing and appealing artwork, Fabian Nicieza and Mark Bagley (and, later, Darick Robertson) made these characters some of the most appealing in comics. The cast that's been assembled for NEW WARRIORS Volume 2 has just as much break-out potential. Through careful planning (and resolution) of subplots and character-arcs, these characters can live and breathe as three-dimensionally as the original cast.

With Justice and Firestar in prominent roles in AVENGERS, and NOVA about to take off, fans are clamoring for a revival of NEW WARRIORS. This relaunch has enough ties to the old series to satiate die-hard original fans, while bringing in enough new elements to engage new readers and keep the series from being a simple retread.

NEW WARRIORS features engaging characterization, carefully-planned subplots, and larger-than-life action, all played with a strong social conscience.

NEW FACES
NEW FOES
NEW ATTITUDE
NEW WARRIORS!

THE PLAYERS

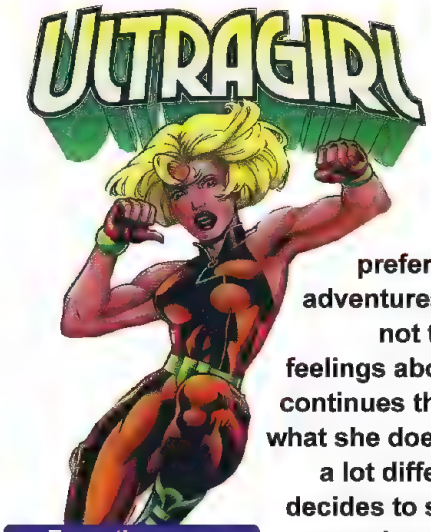
SPEEDBALL - As a member of every incarnation of the Warriors, Robbie Baldwin embodies the team's "soul." And as a hero who had a less-than-stellar solo career, he's also the one who probably "needs" the team the most. When the original Warriors go their separate ways, it's Speedball - who, at 16, is still in high school - who feels the greatest sense of loss. As NWV2 begins, we find that Speedball really misses the Warriors, and when he sees news coverage of some of his old teammates fighting the Imperial Guardsman called Gladiator, he takes this to be an omen that the team was meant to be together. Despite the fact that he's never been the leader-type, Speedball finds himself in the odd role as Senior Team Member with this new batch of heroes, while Free Spirit is the one who ends making most of the decisions. Nevertheless, Speedball quickly grows attached to the new team, while not ever forgetting the old. With such able-bodied teammates as Free Spirit, Ultra Girl, and Vex, you'd think Speedball's infamous hormones would be in overdrive. But while the flirtatious jokes keep coming, it's quickly apparent that Speedball is actually still reeling from his first real relationship (with Timeslip), which went south sometime after the close of NWV1.

RAGE - Considering he's a 15-year-old orphan trapped in the body of an overly-muscled adult, Elvin Halliday is pretty well-adjusted. When the old team broke up, he headed for the West Coast with Chord (his legal guardian) and Thrash, but when he hears about the new team, Rage really wants to be a part of it. He's enjoying living with Thrash and Chord, but he feels like he's only along for the ride. He'd much rather he back in New York, with Speedball. After much cajoling, Chord allows Rage to go back to NY for an extended visit. Of course, Rage instantly wants to be a part of the new team - especially when his flirtation with Ultra Girl continues, much to his surprise. Speedball is the only other member of the team who knows Rage's true age, and Rage will beg him to keep his secret, so he can more successfully romance Ultra Girl. But Rage can't live in NY indefinitely, much as he wants to, and something must be done about his legal guardianship. He'll always feel indebted to Chord and Thrash for taking him in and guiding him, but he's already starting to feel a new sense of family with these new NW. Eventually, Rage finds a new guardian in the form of Marvel Boy's father, Irving Bank. Chord - and the courts - agree to the change, and Rage moves into the Bank residence.

FREE SPIRIT - Having been transformed into an athletic dynamo by one of Captain America's enemies (in CAPTAIN AMERICA #431), 19-year-old Cathy Webster is a driven young woman who is the most idealistic — and mature — member of the team. By the time NWV2 starts up, Free Spirit is majoring in Political Science at Columbia University. Even though she's no longer partnered with Cap (or her fellow protégé, Jack Flag), she still puts in a lot of hours as a super-hero, righting what wrongs she can. She learned to be independent when Cap was thought dead during the Onslaught affair, and even though she feels that she owes her crimefighting career to him, she's comfortable working on her own. As the new team gets under way, she finds herself in the curious role of unofficial leader, as the other members find themselves looking to her level head and shrewd strategies, both in the field and in private matters. She's initially put off by the arrogant and crude mannerisms of Legacy, but in time she begins to harbor a rather strong attraction to the rugged young hero. Shortly after the formation of the team, Free Spirit decides to get an off-campus apartment with Ultra Girl, and the two form a fast friendship. What no one knows about Free Spirit, however, is that shortly after the NW reform, she's recruited by the Commission on Superhuman Activities to act as a spy, making routine reports to them on the NW's adventures. While a part of her feels traitorous, another part of her feels as if she's being a good patriot, by doing what her country asks of her.

LEGACY - Powered by his father's Nega Bands, Genis-Vell comes crashing down to Earth in an attempt to escape Gladiator, who considers him an enemy of the Shi'ar Empire. It's this event that serves as the catalyst for the origin of the new NW, as our various young heroes rally together to fend off the advances of Legacy's pursuers. In the aftermath, Legacy feels less like a hero than ever. He was never really sure he had what it takes, but in the wake of his mother's murder (in the WARLOCK Limited Series), he truly feels like a failure. But meeting these other young heroes, some of whom share both his doubts and aspirations, feels right to him — and he easily makes the decision to join them. Because of his feelings of inadequacy, Legacy

relinquishes the "Captain Marvel" title until he feels he's truly earned it. Having a teammate named Marvel Boy proves to be comically frustrating, however, as people continually think Marvel Boy is Mar-Vell's son! All the self-doubt in the world can't wash away Legacy's machismo, however, and before too long he's back to his swaggering, headstrong self. This trait is a source of great friction in the team, as Legacy continually butts heads with the other team members over all sorts of issues — chiefly, the meaning of "justice." As an alien, Legacy doesn't really have any respect for Earth's laws, so he tends to view "justice" in a more pure, unhampered way.



From the cover of *Ultra Girl #2*

ULTRA GIRL - Having grown frustrated with her attempts at modeling in California, Suzy Sherman has moved to Manhattan, to try her hand at breaking in through some of the East Coast agencies. She's 18, but isn't currently in school — much to the chagrin of her divorced parents. Her folks also don't know that (a) she's Ultra Girl, and (b) that she's secretly a mutant Kree who's destined to lead the Kree people into a new era of greatness. In fact, Ultra Girl herself is trying not to think about that side of things, and prefers to concentrate on breaking into modeling, and continuing her super-heroic adventures. She's shocked, however, to learn that Legacy himself is half-Kree, electing not to let on about her own heritage for quite awhile, as she's still sorting out her feelings about the issue. When Ultra Girl gets back involved with the NW, she cautiously continues the flirtation with Rage that she enjoyed back in her Limited Series. Of course, what she doesn't know is that Rage is actually barely 15 years old, and three years makes a lot difference when the ages are 18 and 15. In the early stages of the team, Ultra Girl decides to share an apartment with Free Spirit, and despite the girls' vast differences (to oversimplify, Ultra Girl is an extrovert and Free Spirit, an introvert), they become close friends. Hailing from California, the land that invented "fake," Ultra Girl is the Warrior who's most suspicious of the devious Vex. And as someone who's preoccupied with fame, Ultra Girl gets the biggest kick out meeting any other Marvel heroes who appear in the book.

MARVEL BOY - As introduced in the last issue of the JUSTICE Limited Series, David Bank is the new Marvel Boy, a mantle that was passed down to him by Vance Astrovik. Since then, Marvel Boy's parents have gotten a divorce, and he and his Dad have moved from New Orleans to New York ... solely because New York is a better place for a super-hero to live — according to Mr. Bank. Since he missed out on the family plasma-generating powers, Mr. Bank is the ultimate "stage dad," desperate for his son to be the hero he never was. David, while eager to help people, isn't as zealous as his old man, and is quite a well-adjusted 15-year-old. Marvel Boy is often the quiet voice of reason amongst some of the more volatile personalities that comprise the NW. In order to be a part of his son's super-heroics, Marvel Boy's dad constantly arranges cook-outs and parties — in an effort to get the NW to socialize at his house. This leads to Marvel Boy being embarrassed, and most of the other NW feeling obligated to show up, yet uncomfortable once they get there.

VEX - Cordelia Frost, the 17-year-old telepathic sister of GENERATION X's Emma Frost, is no different from any other teenage girl: she has aspirations of a life filled with riches, power, and total world domination. Of course, the NW don't know that .... and that's just how she likes it. When Vex sees the young heroes that will comprise the NW on TV, attempting to save Legacy, she decides that it might be a good idea to get in on the ground floor with this bunch. Vex has it in her head that the various factions in the MU are someday going to have a showdown; her experience with various mutant factions has helped form this opinion. In order to ready herself for what she perceives as the inevitable squaring-off, she chooses to ally herself with these NW. Why? Simple: they're young and mallable, and, unlike the other young groups in the MU, they are completely independent free from any guidance from mentor-figures. Shortly into the NW's revived career, the team goes up against an all-new Beetle, and Vex finds herself quite attracted to the young man. While Vex has a long history of using men, this time feels different to her. This time might actually be something real.

TEAM MEETINGS...
SECRET IDENTITIES...
SUPER-CRIMINALS...
...WHO SAID ADOLESCENCE WOULD BE EASY?

THE BREAKDOWN

Issue #1

Legacy is chased to Earth by Gladiator, who holds him responsible for the destruction of a Shi'ar shipping outpost. The battle is noticed by a number of young heroes, including Justice & Firestar (and Marvel Boy, who they are showing around Avengers Mansion), Nova, Speedball, Ultra Girl, and Free Spirit. After the heroes manage to subdue Gladiator, Legacy convinces him he was framed for the crime, and Gladiator apologizes and flies off.

Speedball, seeing Justice, Firestar, and Nova all together at once, sees this adventure as a sign that the NW are due for a comeback. But his old teammates burst Speedball's bubble and inform him that this was just a coincidence, and they have no intention of reforming the team. Before Speedball can get too disappointed, Justice points out that there may be a team in the making in the form of Legacy, Ultra Girl, Free Spirit, and Marvel Boy.

Issue #2

As news of the NW's return spreads, the Commission on Superhuman Activities decides to take preventative measures, since the old team caused quite a few headaches with their disregard for authority. To that end, the Commission recruits Free Spirit (unbeknownst to the readers) to spy on the team for them. This sequence not only sets up one of our main subplots, but also fills in new readers on some of the NW's more infamous exploits, as the Commission reviews their career.

The heavies for the issue are the Sons of the Serpent, a heavily-funded white supremacist group that causes a riot by showing up at the anniversary celebration for a Baptist church in Brooklyn. It'll seem like these guys are throwaway villains, but they're actually part of a major plotline that will come to a head a few issues from now. And, in order to set up the NW's antagonistic relationship with the older heroes (namely, the Avengers), Ultra Girl puts her foot in her mouth while being interviewed by the media, and says that the Warriors have returned to fight the fights the Avengers won't.

Issue #3

The roster is finalized as Rage and Vex join the team. Having heard of the NW's return, Rage is in town on an extended visit from the West Coast. Vex joins the team when the NW interrupt her fight with the Wrecking Crew. After the obligatory fight scene, the Wrecking Crew manages to escape. But later, they're shown being paid off by Vex, who certainly doesn't act like an enemy. By seeing this, readers will, hopefully, peg her as the Commission's spy.

In our downtime scenes, the Warriors hang out at Marvel Boy's house (much to his dad's delight) while trying to decide what to use as an HQ. And Ultra Girl and Free Spirit go in on an apartment together.

Issue #4

Speedball's father (the DA of Springdale, the town where it's illegal to be a super-hero!) actually requests the NW's help in dealing with Springdale's first official super-team: Psionex! The Warriors are granted "official clearance" by the DA's office, and they set out to run Psionex out of town. After the skirmish that always ensues when Psionex is around, the NW examine the concept of true heroism, and how it's far easier to label yourself a hero than to actually be one.

Psionex is finally faced with the undeniable fact that they chose to become the "official super-team of Springdale" because they know it's the one place they'll never have to act like heroes. Speedball's dad declines to press any charges, and Psionex leaves, heading off to further examine their role as heroes in an ever-confusing world.

On the homefront, Vex uses the trust fund set up for her by Emma Frost to rent the Crashpad from Thrash, so the team can have an official HQ.

Issue #5

The NW split up in order to handle two separate crises. Free Spirit and Legacy accompany Marvel Boy and his dad back to New Orleans, when they receive news that Marvel Boy's kid sister, Nancy, has disappeared. While Mr. Bank deals with his wife's anger and feelings of abandonment because of their divorce, Marvel Boy, Free Spirit, and Legacy begin to suspect that Nancy is in the clutches of someone she met via the internet. They've found chat transcripts buried on her computer which reveal that Nancy has been hanging out in chat-rooms, claiming to be a mutant. It doesn't take long to realize that Nancy wishes she was a mutant, like her brother, since that might make her father notice her.

Meanwhile, in NY, the remaining NW try and stop the all-new Beetle, who's making a name for himself by ripping off technological breakthroughs from their developers, and then re-selling them on the black market. Their first encounter with the Beetle leaves most of the team bruised ... and Vex smitten.

Issue #6

In New Orleans, Free Spirit uses her detective skills to track Nancy to a local man who practices voodoo, and wants to use his voodoo to control Nancy's (alleged) mutant powers. Meanwhile, Marvel Boy fights to keep his father and mother from killing each other. During the final confrontation with the voodoo master, Marvel Boy manages to save his little sister. The real challenge, however, comes when his mom asks that she remain in New Orleans with her, and Marvel Boy is faced with the task of choosing one parent over the other. Ultimately, he chooses his father, a decision his mom isn't likely to soon forget.

In NY, the NW again throw down with the new Beetle, who again defeats them all except Vex. When faced with the opportunity to catch him, she ends up letting him go, for reasons even she can't fully explain.

Issue #7

A look at what the NW would do if they had absolutely no inhibitions is what ensues when the team goes up against Madcap, that wacky master of mayhem who can cause anyone who looks into his eyes to go "mad." Acting with reckless abandon, the NW run rampant across Manhattan, and we get surprising insights into the personalities (for instance, Legacy and Free Spirit can't keep their hands off each other ... Ultra Girl poses and preens for anyone who will watch .... and Speedball acts serious?). After Speedball manages to defeat Madcap, the Avengers (responding to the NW's destructive "antics") arrive.

Issue #8

Our first bit of action has Speedball and some of the Avengers (definitely Firestar and Justice) teaming up to subdue the still-whacked-out NW. The older Avengers then give the kids a "stern warning," about acting responsibly and not repeating some of the mistakes they made last time around (providing some truly awkward moments for Justice and Firestar). And depending on which Avengers are present, we can begin our careful foreshadowing of Legacy's future as an Avenger.

In the subplot department, we start building up to issue #12, as Ultra Girl gets a mysterious phone call that has her visibly-shaken, yet not willing to talk about it with Free Spirit.

The NW again go up against yet more Sons of the Serpent. This time, they're causing trouble at an Inner City Community Center, trying to drive a wedge between the white kids, and the other racially-diverse youths.

Issue #9

Sick of cleaning up after the Sons of the Serpents' messes, the Warriors decide to get more proactive, and manage to trace the group back to their headquarters (a little too easily, Free Spirit notices). As the fighting starts, the NW realize they're in luck, and the Sons' leader is on the premises. Rage manages to get hold of him and rip his mask off, revealing ... Night Thrasher!

Ultra Girl gets visitors from California, but she hurries them out of the apartment before Free Spirit can determine who they are or what they want. They act vaguely like family, but they don't match any of the pictures of Ultra Girl's family she's seen.

Issue #10

Night Thrasher vs. the New Warriors! As Thrash fights like a man possessed against his former team, Vex realizes that's just it: he is possessed. It's then that the man that's been pulling Night Trasher's strings steps forward: the Hate Monger! Having had previous involvement with the Sons of the Serpent (way back in AVENGERS #341-342), he decided to up the ante this time by twisting Thrash's hate around, and directing it towards Thrash's own ethnic race. While the Warriors have faced the Hate Monger before, they've never had their own psychic to counter him, so as the NW clean up the rest of the Sons of the Serpent, Vex goes to work against the Hate Monger, eventually stripping away his empathic shields and revealing a small, ugly old man, powered by a lifetime of hate that he somehow managed to manipulate.

Issue #11

Setting up events for #12, Ultra Girl is abducted by her mysterious visitors, who turn out to be her Kree-brethren, who are looking to her to fulfill her destiny as the "Ultimate Unifier." Having taken her to rural Montana (where an ancient Kree spaceship is buried), the Kree tell her that she's finally ready to lead the white Kree into their golden age. They explain further that it's a sort of prophecy that all the exiled and excommunicated white Kree will soon converge on their old, dead, homeworld, where they will look to the Ultimate Unifier for leadership. The prophecy is almost complete. There's just one piece missing.

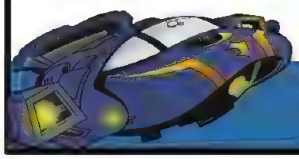
Meanwhile, having seen each other in a different light after Madcap's "craziness" wore off, Free Spirit and Legacy go out on a date, and end up having a fantastically-romantic time. When Free Spirit returns from her date, she realizes Ultra Girl is missing, and rallies the NW to look for her. They're able to track her down by using the homing beacon in her NW comm-badge. As the NW approach Ultra Girl and the Kree, the Kree suddenly announce that now the prophecy can be completed -- the other part of the prophecy is that the Ultimate Unifier will marry the son of the white Kree's greatest hero. And that would be Legacy, son of Captain Marvel.

Issue #12 (double-sized issue)

The NW barely have time to process what they've just heard, because the Kree elder convinces Ultra Girl and Legacy to accompany her into the bowels of the unearthed spaceship. While the elder tries to convince the two young heroes that this is their destiny, the American military detects two large Shi'ar spaceships entering Earth's orbit. Back in Montana, the NW have grown tired of waiting for Ultra Girl and Legacy, but before they can storm the ship, two Kree Sentries appear, and attempt to detain them. During the fight, the Imperial Guard shows up, along with some Shi'ar dignitaries. The fight between the Sentries and the NW then becomes a free-for-all when the Imperial Guard is thrown into the mix. The Sentries are the first to fall, leaving the NW to face the Imperial Guard.

Inside the Kree base, the elder recaps Kree history, and imparts upon Legacy and Ultra Girl the importance of their combined destinies. Here we can use some misdirection, as Legacy can think this is the "greatness" the Avengers said was in store for him. Before their talk can progress, Gladiator comes crashing through the ship's hull, having been punched by Rage. Legacy is furious — he thought he and Gladiator had settled things. Gladiator states that he's here to quell the Kree uprising. Legacy, Ultra Girl, and the elder go outside, and the fighting between the NW and Imperial Guard stops, as everyone is interested to hear what the Kree have to say. Vex uses her mental powers to reveal that one of the Kree is a traitor, and is responsible for informing the Shi'ar of the Kree's plans. The Shi'ar are ready to eradicate all the Kree — including Ultra Girl and Legacy — without a second thought, but Ultra Girl and Legacy smooth things over, which only makes the Kree even more certain that the prophecy has come true. But Legacy and Ultra Girl convince them that even if it is true, it's not happening now. They're not ready to get married (not to mention, rule a planet!). Reluctantly, the Kree leave in their ship, and Shi'ar, confident that they don't presently have anything to fear from Legacy and Ultra Girl, follow suit.

But just when the NW think it's all over, they're surrounded by Gyrich and an army of Mandroids. Gyrich informs them that the Commission on Superhuman Activities wants to debrief the NW, in light of recent events.



DID YOU KNOW? NOVA ALLOWED THE NEW WARRIORS THE USE OF ONE OF THE DETACHABLE HOVERPODS FROM HIS XANDARIAN CRUISER?

Annual #1

While I want to bill this as "The Trial of the New Warriors," the proceedings in this issue are really more in the form of an inquisition, or a debriefing, than an actual trial.

We pick up right where we left off, with the NW being surrounded by the Mandroids. The NW decide to fight, which is a good thing, since most of the rest of the issue will be character-oriented. After a skirmish with the Mandroids, Free Spirit convinces the team to surrender, and hear Gyrich out. The NW are then whisked away to the Commission's top-secret headquarters in Washington DC.

Once there, the rest of the issue takes place in the Commission's HQ. At the start of the inquisition, it's explained that the purpose is for the Commission to decide whether or not to brand the NW a "super-powered menace." While they've never had official government clearance, this branding would make them no better than the X-Men. What prompted this is the fact that the team almost re-ignited the Kree / Shi'ar war — on Earth! As the Commission goes over their case, the NW begin to realize there's been a spy in their midst almost since their reformation.

During a recess of the proceedings, the NW try desperately to flush out the mole that's been living among them. All the team's petty differences come to a head as the accusations fly, with fingers being pointed at everyone from Rage to Vex. Finally, Free Spirit steps forward and admits to her duplicity. The team is shocked, with Legacy feeling especially betrayed. Free Spirit tries to explain that she only had the team's best interests in mind, and that she never wanted to hurt her friends. These Commission guys are the good guys, she reminds them. The NW have mixed feelings on that label, of course.

When the inquiry reconvenes, Free Spirit makes her official report, in front of both the Commission and the NW. While she admits that the team routinely bucks authority, she believes that they have always acted in the best interests of justice, and for the good of the people. She recommends that no action be taken against them.

As for the Commission's decision....that's up for debate. I want this Annual to really shake things up, like when "The Judas Contract" concluded in a NEW TEEN TITANS ANNUAL, way back when. A couple ideas on how to do that:

- **Free Spirit, wracked with guilt over betraying the team, kills herself. I highly doubt Marvel would ever let us do this, but hey, I had to at least throw it out there.**

- **We could make the NW the government's official super-team, living in a compound in Washington and reporting directly to the Commission. This has been done before, but I think we could make it interesting.**

- **We could make the team outlaws, and on the run. THUNDERBOLTS-territory, I know, but hey, I'm just thinking out loud here.**

- **We could make the team outlaws, and have them flee into space, playing up some of their cosmic-connections. We could then spend the next year or so exploring Marvel-space.**

- **We could make the book about two smaller NW teams: one, featuring Free Spirit as the leader of a government-regulated, all-new team of super-teens; the other, featuring most of our existing cast, as rebel super-teens.**

And depending on what we do with the Annual, here's some more specific story / subplot ideas for our second year.

Year Two

Developments in the NW's second year include:

- **With Chord spending most of his time helping Thrash recover from Hate-Monger's control, he can't be as effective as Rage's legal guardian. And since Rage wants to keep hanging with the NW, something has to change. Enter Irving Bank, Marvel Boy's dad, who just might make a good foster dad.**

- **Vex begins a secret romance with the villainous Beetle — but is she really in love with the guy, or is she using him to get something?**

- **The Force of Nature returns! This time they're hired by a group of environmentalists in Washington State to kill destroy a clear-cutting operation. Can the Warriors stop them? Will they even want to?**

The Wrap-Up

With an intriguing cast, carefully-developed subplots, social commentary, and larger-than-life action, I think NEW WARRIORS can be a success for Marvel Comics. I've got an inexhaustible amount of enthusiasm for the project, and I thank you for giving me the opportunity to pitch it.

THE NEW WARRIORS

In *Marvel Adventures Super Heroes*, Nova often talked about social media and how it could benefit the Avengers. Let's imagine if he went on to create an interactive website for the superheroes of his universe:

HeroesHub

Home Account Settings

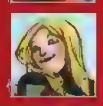
Main
My Stuff
Graffiti
Postcards
Videos

Fellow Heroes (10)

Captain America

Vision

Iron Man


Invisible Woman

Thor

Black Widow

Nova (Richard Rider)

My Stuff More

Hometown: New York City
Headquarters: Avengers Mansion
Team Affiliation: Avengers
Powers: Super-strength, flight, speed, invulnerability, power blasts
Interests: Stomping bad guys, picking up chicks with Thor

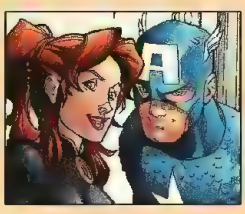
Graffiti More

@VictorShade - Dude, just because u can phase through walls doesn't mean u don't knock when my door is closed! Not kul!

@SteveRogers - Can I borrow your shield for the afternoon? Some babes want to go sledding today.

@NatashaRomanov - Nat, I was totally not oggling u @ the Avengers meeting! The lighting off my helmet just made it look that way! Man, I need to add white lenses to my lid.

Postcards More



Videos More

Currently no videos posted

Say Hello To A Hero!

Add Nova to Fellow Heroes

Chat with Nova online!

Send Nova An E-Mail!

People You May Know

Bobby Rider

Fran

Carolina Pissarro

Sponsored Ads

AVENGERS

STARK ENTERPRISES

THE NORSE FOUNDATION

What Might Have Been

In 2004, Dan Abnett, Andy Lanning and Chris Batista proposed a new Nova series to Marvel. Unfortunately, the publisher passed on the creative team's pitch. However, Chris Batista was able to provide some of the design sketches he had submitted with the proposal along with his thoughts.

On The Proposal's Storyline:

"We had a badass Sci Fi epic, intergalactic war story mapped out. It was a hard edge war story with a redefined Nova Corp.

Richard Rider was going to be less of a superhero and more of a soldier in our story. Not that he would be any less the hero but he is a Nova Prime with responsibilities to the Xandarian people and that requires him to be drafted into their war against a terrible enemy.

The lines are no longer black and white, far more shades of grey. We wanted a very hard Sci Fi take on the character but not to lose what made him cool in the first place."

Nova

Nova Corps Uniforms

On The Nova Corps Redesign:

"Nova's costume was definitely meant as armor. We called them Nova Skins. Each member of the Corp was the equivalent of an alien fighter jet. Massive sensor and threat assessment capabilities that linked to the bearer through an AI. This would enable the bearer to make lightning quick decisions in heavy firefights. Plus their AI learns and adapts.

I broke the Corps down into regiments. Instead of everyone looking exactly the same, I felt a change in color would make them stand out more. Less like the Green Lantern Corps. They were definitely military. The equivalent of the Xandarian air force as well."

NOVA

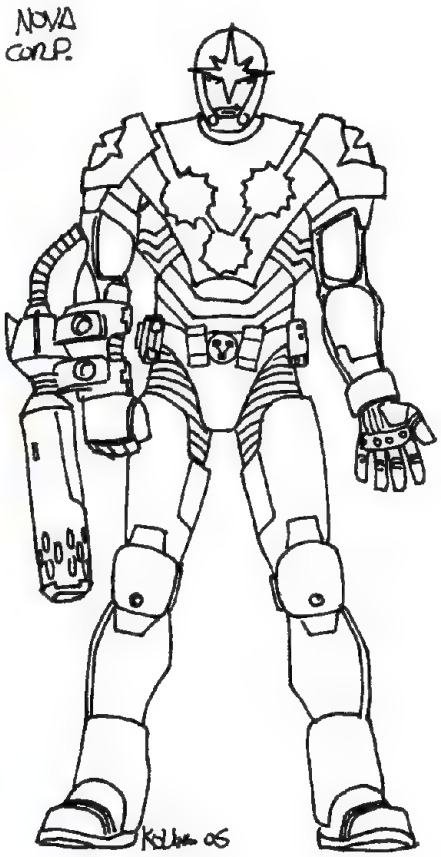
Art by Wil Ecolango

Nova Sketchbook

For Annihilation, editor Andy Schmidt approached artist Scott Kolins to redesign, among other things, the uniforms of the Nova Corps. The following are a number of Scott's sketches and designs for the series.

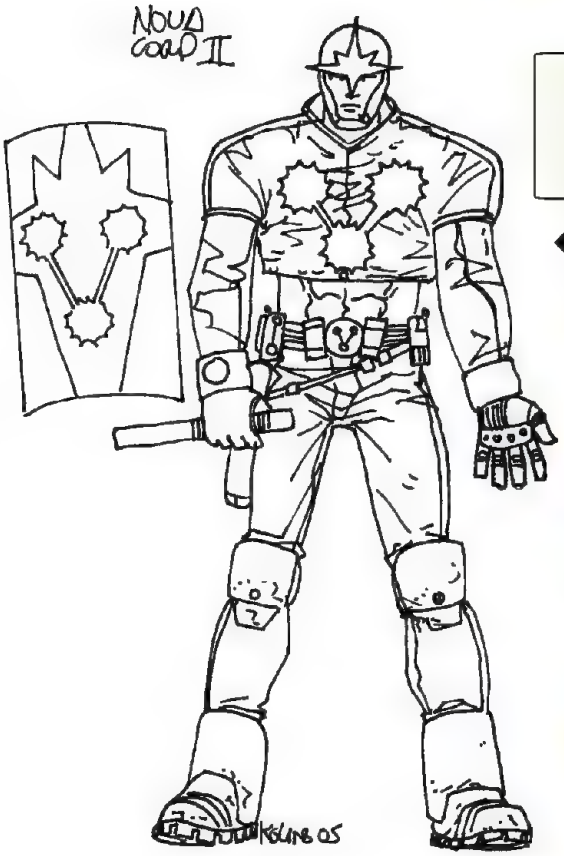
Scott recalls "It was fairly open for my interpretation at first - as I remember. Andy Schmidt asked for some ideas for how the Corp might look now - even though it was known that the Corp would not survive Annihilation.

So 'SK Novas' was my first idea - that got shot down as 'too military', Andy wanted to keep the Corp more like police."

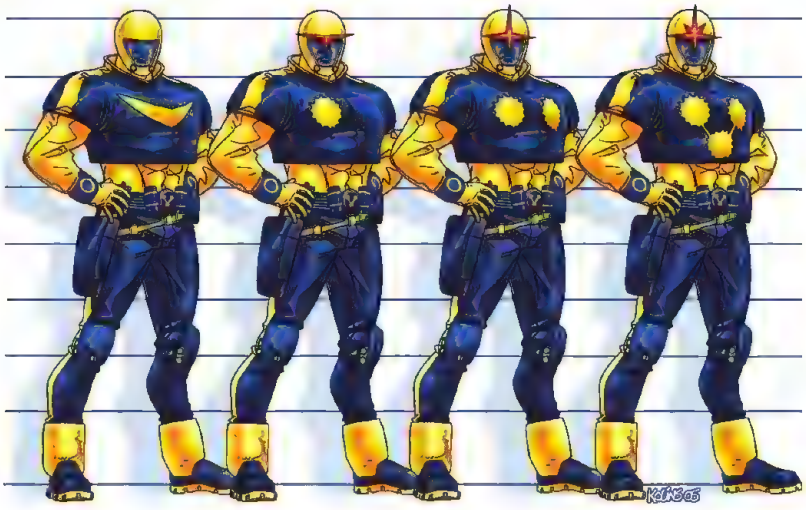


SK Novas

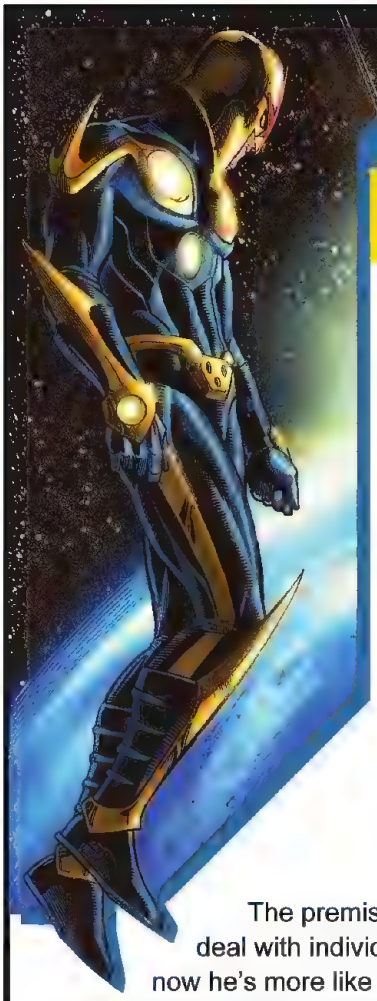
Nova Corps 2



Scott continues "So then I made 'Nova Corps 2' - almost like football players which Andy liked. Then I finished off the entire line Corp rankings with 'New Nova Corps Done'."



New Nova Corps Done



Attention! It Is Critical You Pay Attention At This Time!

A Look at the Original Story Ideas for Nova's Series by Dan Abnett and Andy Lanning! This Draft was Created in July 2006. Very Special Thanks to DnA for Sharing it with Us!

NOVA

Ideas for Nova ongoing series

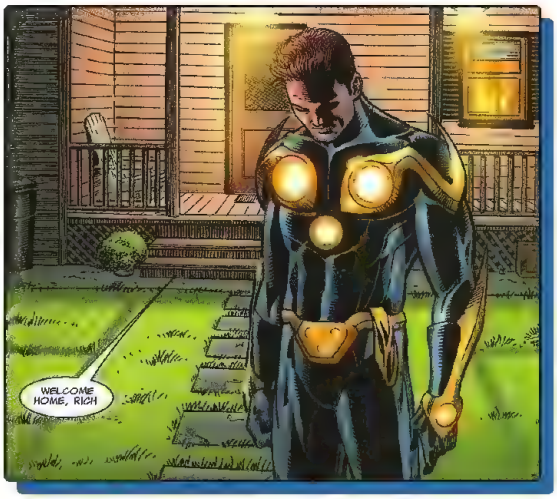
After the events of the Annihilation, the matured and sober Nova returns to Earth to re-establish contact with his friends and family, leaving the aftermath and rebuilding in the capable hands of the United Front who are forming a fledgling galactic UN.

The galaxy has become a more dangerous place to live in the wake of the War. Centralised law and galactic government has broken down in many regions of space. The galaxy is akin to Europe after WW2 or the lawless frontiers of The West: many factions and criminal elements have taken advantage of the chaotic situation for their own ends. Warlords, feuding clans/races and opportunistic raiders are roaming the unstable regions of space. In this volatile post-war situation there is a desperate need for the stabilising influence of law and order but one of the principle providers of that stability - the Nova Corps - is dead and gone. It falls to Nova to do what he can to bring law to the lawless, help to the oppressed and justice for all!

The premise of this ongoing series is to have Nova operating as a wandering marshall, called in to deal with individual problems throughout the galaxy. Nova started out as a cop, then became a soldier, now he's more like a Texas Ranger. Nova discovers a huge stockpile of unanswered and desperate communications that have been sent to the Nova Corps by people who have no idea that it no longer exists. Throughout the entire duration of the Annihilation War, the Worldmind has stored these communiqués not knowing what to do with them and keeping them from Nova so as not to distract him from what it sees is his primary mission: locating a new home for it and recreating the Corps. Nova learns of the SOS's and decides to act upon them, using his stargate creating powers to travel anywhere in the galaxy that needs him. This puts him at odds with the Worldmind once more, the WM wants the Nova Corps recreated as quickly as possible and the Nova Force shared out between suitable candidates. It reasons that this could be accomplished with a single visit to a city with a sizeable population. Richard also wants to see the Corps reborn, but is much more cautious about how that can be achieved. He thinks a quick fix would be a terrible mistake. He knows first hand what a dangerous responsibility the Nova Force is and believes it would be irresponsible to start portioning it out to untrained and unvetted individuals. He advocates a slower process. It's possible in the first dozen issues of the series he might create one or two 'deputies' and give them a portion of the Nova Force, but this will only happen if he finds someone he can trust. Also, because they don't have access to Xandarian technology, when Nova distributes the power it doesn't turn his deputies into Nova clones: the Nova Force gives them more individual and unique powers as it must bond with them genetically (as it has done with Richard). Therefore we will not be creating a whole slew of Nova copies. Each new deputy will maintain a 'uniform' look but have their own distinct take and approach.

As an ongoing backstory which will lead to a major story arc, the Worldmind is slowly going insane. It entered Richard's mind to protect his mental health while he carried the burden of the entire Nova Force, but in protecting Richard, it has itself suffered. The WM's mental state is turning irrationally towards revenge. The real reason it wants to rebuild the Nova Corp so quickly is that it wants to mobilise an army to hunt out and destroy Annihilus, the murderer of Xandar. Richard's more cautious approach does not suit it. In time it will deem him an unworthy vessel for the Nova legacy, and, as it becomes increasingly more paranoid, it attempts to transfer itself and the Nova Force to a more suitable carrier. . . someone with single-minded experience of vengeance. . . someone like Drax! Drax, in the wake of the War, has found himself without purpose. He cannot get past his hardwired need for vengeance, even though Thanos is dead. He therefore sets out to purge the galaxy of Thanos' legacy and eradicate all trace of him and his works from galactic history. He will embrace the WM's offer with open arms and adopt Annihilus as the new focus of his unquenchable revenge.

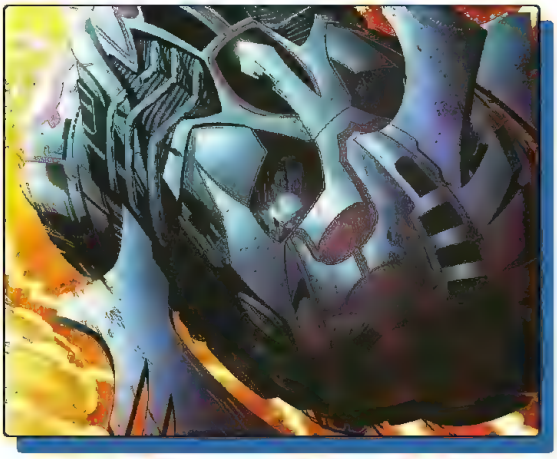
On his return to Earth, Richard finds that he cannot fit in. He interacts with family and friends, but he has seen too much, and been through too much, and carries with him, as his responsibility, an almost Godlike reserve of power and knowledge. Richard is especially traumatised to learn of the deaths of the New Warriors, the event that triggered the Civil War. The consequences of the Civil War serve to fuel his unease and alienation. He feels he doesn't belong anymore. He sets out to find Nitro, unclear as to what he will do when he finds him (but urged on by the WM which has a very heightened sense of vengeance at this time) . Before he can make a decision, he is surrounded by the Avengers (or whoever is fulfilling their role in the MU) . They have been tracking him ever since he arrived on the planet, terrified by the power levels he is exhibiting. He is not the Nova they knew and they seem convinced that he is almost too dangerous to be on Earth. They want to hand him over to SHIELD for extensive evaluations. This seals it for Nova and he quits Earth, believing that Earth will always be able to look after itself because of its considerable superhero population. He decides to take himself off to where there isn't a superhero on every street corner and it is at this time that he learns of the SOS back log which gives him purpose.



The first couple of issues show Nova in his new role as a marshall, dealing with a few of the back log SOS's in dramatic fashion and refering back to 'what happened on Earth' with the WM. His new status quo is fully explained, as is his relationship with the WM.

Issue 3 or 4 is then a stand alone issue flashing back to the events on Earth described above, as Nova explains his motivation for his new role possibly in conversation with a character such as Starlord or Gamora.

Possible story ideas that thread into the backstory of the WM's disintegration:



Nova locates a strange gigantic artifact that turns out to be the fossilized head of a Celestial, decapitated by means unknown eons before. He relocates it and ends up using it as a base of operations for reason to be developed. The head also becomes a mcguffin by which Nova imprisons the WM once it goes insane, using its neural network as home for the computer sentience and enabling it to restore its sanity.

Nova tackles a rouge Kree Sentry that has been battle damaged during the Annihilation War and is running amok, driven by damaged programming.

Nova is called to the aid of a planet that is under threat from a 'Sargasso Sea' of starship debris. The sea is a known cosmic feature: a swarm of galactic debris attracted to a small magnatar star that roams the galaxy like a comet amassing more debris as it goes. The massive shockwaves generated by the Annihilation Wave have effected the magnetar's gravitational pattern which is causing it to 'shed' huge swathes of it's attendant debris. This debris is raining down on a populated planet in the form of meteorites. Nova assumes that he must destroy the debris but soon discovers it is inhabited by an alien creature who parasitically live in it's 'ecosystem'. Nova uses a stargate to transport the sea into a region of uninhabited space.

Nova is called in to a remote Shi'ar colony to handle the extradition of a space pirate captured by the Shi'ar console. The pirate turns out to be Corsair of the Starjammers, who is less than happy to see a Nova arrive. He had allowed himself to be captured so that he could infiltrate the colony's prison where the corrupt console is running a lucrative black-market organ trade using the indigenous shapeshifters (maybe Kree) as donors - there is a huge demand for organs and transplant material in the aftermath of the war and the shapeshifters can become any race. Corsair had deliberately requested extradition to Xandar because he knew the Corp had ceased to exist and he knew this would give him time to investigate. Nova's arrival spoils the plan but he ends up teaming up with the jammers to put an end to this vile trafficking.

Another major arc finds Nova investigating the sinister reappearance of the Phalanx. The Phalanx appears to be spreading out aggressively because there is no one to stem their growth in the post-war ruins. However, the Phalanx are behaving in unconventional ways and appear to be displaying a greater individual freewill. Rather than taking over worlds in their normal fashion, they are stripping and salvaging materials from planets as they move swiftly to an ultimate destination, they are heading to Earth. In a big reveal, we discover that they are being controlled and directed by Ultron. He has reprogrammed their hivemind to serve his own ends. Ultron's first desire is to return to Earth and destroy his own father, an ambition reinforced by the Phalanx's own inbred tradition of patricide. He has directed the Phalanx to scavenge materials from the worlds they infect in order to facilitate their journey back to Earth (or to build him a new body). It transpires that Ultron is in fact imprisoned on Earth in some facility where he is being dissected and dismantled. Here he has been able to send out his consciousness into space using various intergalactic communication hubs to piggyback his signal into the deepest regions of space where he has encountered the biotechnological Phalanx and discovered their kindred spirit.

DnA Under The Scope!

With the completion of their Nova series and Thanos Imperative, Dan Abnett and Andy Lanning answer a few questions about their magnificent run.

As readers, we only see the final version of a writer's work. As fans, we sometimes wonder how do storylines change from your original plans. In this case, how did they change during your run on Nova and what led to the changes?

DnA: Everything on an ongoing book evolves. You change as continuity changes around you. Sometimes you just have a better idea than the one you were working towards. We always had a rough driving plan and improvised or adjusted where necessary.

I think all of us Nova fans were shocked to read that the series wasn't continuing after issue #36. What led to the decision to place the Nova title on hiatus and later sacrificing the character in the Cancerverse?

DnA: Nova was a well-loved book, with great critical acclaim, but it wasn't a bestseller. There would have come a point where the book would have to end, and we wanted to end deliberately, with a good closure, rather than get a book cancelled out from under us mid-story (something we were sure the readers would have hated). This seemed the best way to do that, the most satisfying. The ending of the Thanos event was determined by a number of factors, including the wishes of Marvel, but that 'last stand' remains one of our all time favorite moments.

If the series had continued, what threats and storylines may we have seen in Nova?

DnA: Supernova. And Nova would have probably stayed in the Annihilators.

I realize that asking you both this next one is like asking someone to pick their favorite child. However, which of your Nova stories felt the best written to you? The one that you would point to and say "that's the one where we really nailed it".

DnA: That's really hard, but by a short nose - the return to Earth, when he met Iron Man and Robbie.

Is there any message you'd like to send out to the Nova fans?

DnA: Thanks for all the support, please put your cosmic love behind The Annihilators, and keep watching the skies!

Nova and Starlord go out in Butch and Sundance Style! (Thanos Imperative #6)

GERALDO BORGES 2011©

Rappin' With The Rosemann

An Interview With Marvel Cosmic Editor Bill Rosemann

How do you think Nova, as a character, changed during your editorial run?

It was very fun to watch Dan Abnett & Andy Lanning continue Rich Rider's evolution that began in Annihilation. Rich has lived through a lot, first on his solo adventures, then as a New Warrior, and finally in the front lines -- where he grew to become a leader -- during a series of horrific cosmic wars. Rich may still have his hot-headed tendencies, but they're tempered by the wisdom that comes from experience.

The entire Nova series featured an extremely talented array of writers and artists. Obviously that requires more than just luck. As the series editor, what particular constants did you look for when selecting them?

The goal was to marry a "modern super hero" visual and tone with the "weird sci-fi" genre. Nova began as "Spider-Man + Star Wars", so DnA and I attempted to carry on that tradition, while recruiting and cultivating the best talent available. It was a true honor to work with every creator who graced us with their energy, skill, professionalism and enthusiasm.

During the Nova series, were there any storylines that didn't see print or stories that had to be changed for some reason?

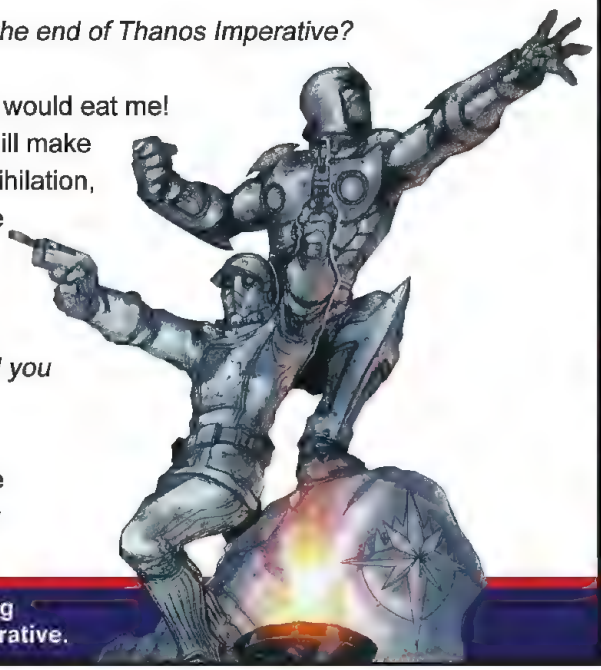
Every story changes to some extent from opening conversation to the printed page, but that's part of the unique nature of comic book creation. As for which stories never saw print…"Rich and Cosmo Hit Vegas" will one day live!

What led to the decision to take Nova out of the Marvel Universe at the end of Thanos Imperative?

Sorry, Doug, I can't reveal private creative discussions…or Galactus would eat me! But on a personal note, it was very satisfying to see Rich & Peter Quill make their final stand together. They both rose to prominence through Annihilation, so - five years later - it was nice to see their character arcs intertwine and come to a climax simultaneously. Butch and Sundance don't have anything on them!

Ideally, how would you like to see Nova handled at this point? Would you like to see him off the board for awhile, a quick return, etc.?

When and/or if the concept of Nova continues, I would like to see the Human Rocket shock, amaze and blow away readers…in the Mighty Marvel Manner!



Nova and Starlord were lost in the collapsing Cancerverse at the end of The Thanos Imperative.

Art by Chris Anderson
C. ANDERSON '10

Art by James "Bukshot" Bukauskas

MINI MARVELS
I WONDER WHY THE WORLDMIND DECIDED TO CHANGE OUR UNIFORMS FROM BLUE TO RED?
SHE'S BEEN WATCHING A LOT OF ORIGINAL STAR TREK AND SAID RED SHIRTS SEEMED "FITTING FOR THE CORPS."
SEE THE STARS
NOVA CORPS
EXOTIC LOCATIONS
NOVA CORPS
HEY—! THATS NOT FUNNY!!
THE REAL REASON THE NOVA CORPS GOT SMALLER AFTER THE WAR OF KINGS
WRITTEN BY- DOUG SMITH
ART BY -BUKSHOT-!
WITH SPECIAL THANKS TO CHRIS GIARRUSSO!

Nova Sketchbook

For the new Nova Corps, editor Bill Rosemann approached artist Kevin Sharpe to redesign the uniforms of the Nova Corps to reflect their new Probationers status. The following are some of Sharpe's sketches and designs for the series.

Probationers Uniform Designs

The new uniforms first appear in Nova #29 v4. Later in the series, it was revealed that the uniform change was due to the new WorldMind. It felt the new Corps needed to be fully trained before having Centurion status.

This may have been a result of Ko-Rel being the new personality for the WorldMind. Ko was killed in her first adventure as a Centurion and had not received any training in the use of her powers.

Nova Prime

To the right are design sketches by Kevin Sharpe of Nova Prime Richard Rider without his helmet.

Below is Sharpe's final version of Nova Prime as he appeared in Nova #25 v4.

WITHIN THESE CELLS FLOAT THE STILL-FUNCTIONING BRAINS OF ALL WHO HAVE EVER DIED ON XANDAR!
TOGETHER, THEY CONTAIN ALL THE KNOWLEDGE WE POSSESS.
TOGETHER, THESE MINDS CONTAIN POWER THAT IS UNIMAGINED
AND SO IT IS ONLY HERE THAT THE SECRETS OF OUR SURVIVAL CAN BE FOUND.
RICHARD.
I WAS EXPECTING SOMEONE TALLER.
I DO NOT--
SKIP IT. I'M HERE NOW. SO WHAT HAPPENS NEXT?
I CAN HEAR YOU QUITE CLEARLY.

All Minds A Worldmind

A Brief History Of The Living Computers by Darren Blackburn

"I am everything the Xandarian culture has ever been. All its arts, sciences, history, technology, philosophy. I contain a bio-template of the entire race." Annihilation Nova 1

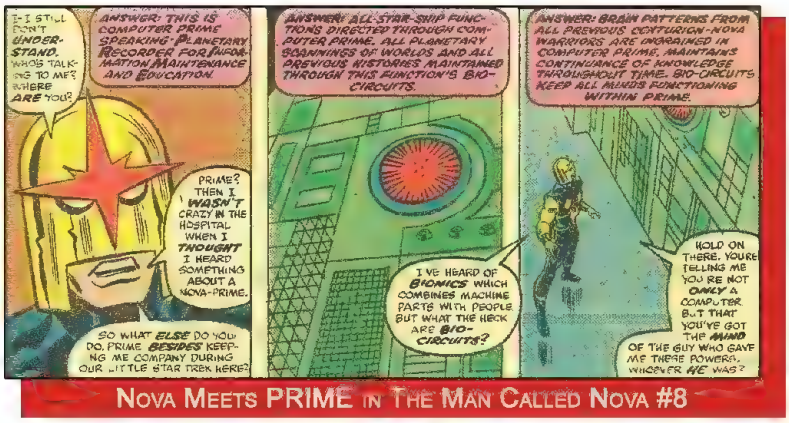
A key aspect of Nova's most recent adventures piloted by Abnett and Lanning has been Richard Rider's evolving relationship with a certain Class G Collective Artificial Sentience – otherwise known as the Xandarian Worldmind. Many new Nova fans following the human rocket's adventures post Annihilation often said on internet forums how they loved this unexpected partnership; a key aspect which strongly contributed to Volume 4's overall success. They certainly became an odd couple - Richard's anti-authoritarian streak often rebelling against the cold, emotionless logic of Worldmind's collective consciousness, ignoring Worldmind's "It's critical you pay attention" policy, chiding Nova's recklessness - endangering the existence of the Xandarian Legacy while engaging some hugely powerful foe....

Right from the beginning, it was apparent that Nova's creator, Marv Wolfman, wanted to create a character designed to bridge the gap between the genres of science fiction and Lee and Kirby's established superhero genre. It wouldn't be easy. The comparisons between Nova and a certain lantern wielding gent from the distinguished competition would be a continued source of debate which still echoes today. But the foundations of the hero that would become Nova and the concepts that would eventually shape him were already evident in Marv's own fan strips, Black Nova.

Just as Black Nova had his own spaceship, so too would Nova eventually pilot his own fantastic vessel which was introduced right at the beginning of Nova's first volume. Right on the splash page for Nova 1 (Vol. 1, 1976) – the very first panel drawn by John Buscema depicts Rhomann Dey's "mile long spaceship" coming into geo synch orbit around our little planet – the dying Centurion desperate to transfer his amazing powers to some unsuspecting Terran to exact revenge on Zorr – the monster responsible for destroying his home planet and his family. It was clear that Dey came from a very advanced technological race – to which teenager Richard Rider only got glimpses of in the mind-link between himself and the dying Nova Prime. It wouldn't be until issues 7 and 8 that the nature of the link - and hints of the story behind the story of Nova's extraterrestrial origins would be explored – when Wolfman introduces readers to the ship's computer: PRIME.

"Prime? Then I wasn't crazy in hospital when I thought I heard something about a Nova-Prime..."
Richard Rider. Nova 8 - Vol. 1

PRIME, an acronym for Planetary Recording for Information Maintenance and Education was the controlling computer that kept everything ship-shape on the Upholder class Corps ship, linked directly to Dey's brain via his helmet's psionic circuits. After Dey's demise, PRIME kept on fulfilling its duty, waiting for the new Centurion Nova Prime to take responsibility. It's here we get the first clue to the nature of Xandarian computers and how they differ from their Terran analogues. No state of the art Spectrum ZX81's here – PRIME utilizes bio-circuits – brain engrams of all previous Centurions, crew, etc stored within a "mindframe" so that information on a million different star systems, military strategies, etc can be accessed instantaneously from a living repository of accumulated data.


I-I STILL DON'T UNDERSTAND, WHOS TALKING TO ME? WHERE ARE YOU?
ANSWER: THIS IS COMPUTER PRIME SPEAKING - PLANETARY RECORDER FOR AURA-MATION MAINTENANCE AND EDUCATION.
PRIME? THEN I WASN'T CRAZY IN THE HOSPITAL WHEN I THOUGHT I HEARD SOMETHING ABOUT A NOVA-PRIME.
SO WHAT ELSE DO YOU DO, PRIME BESIDES KEEPING ME COMPANY DURING OUR LITTLE STAR TREK HERE?
ANSWER: ALL STAR-SHIP FUNCTIONS DIRECTED THROUGH COMPUTER PRIME. ALL PLANETARY EXAMINATIONS OF WORLDS AND ALL PREVIOUS HISTORIES MAINTAINED THROUGH THIS FUNCTION'S BIO-CIRCUITS.
I'VE HEARD OF BIONICS WHICH COMBINES MACHINE PARTS WITH PEOPLE BUT WHAT THE HECK ARE BIO-CIRCUITS?
ANSWER: BRAIN PATTERNS FROM ALL PREVIOUS CENTURION-NOVA WARRIORS ARE ENGRAINED IN COMPUTOR PRIME. MAINTAINS CONTINUANCE OF KNOWLEDGE THROUGHOUT TIME. BIO-CIRCUITS KEEP ALL MINDS FUNCTIONING WITHIN PRIME.
HOLD ON THERE. YOU'RE TELLING ME YOU'RE NOT ONLY A COMPUTER BUT THAT YOU'VE GOT THE MIND OF THE GUY WHO GAVE ME THESE POWERS, WHOEVER HE WAS?
NOVA MEETS PRIME IN THE MAN CALLED NOVA #8

I've often considered that if Marv Wolfman had stayed on Nova and the first series hadn't ended after issue 25, we could have read the future Richard/Worldmind partnership 35 years earlier – as is, Marv opted to double back by temporarily severing Rich's access to PRIME by having Nova head back Earthside to save Roger Cooper from drowning. He would stay on Earth for another fifteen issues, continuing his attempt to be the "next big thing since Spiderman" before the SF aspects of Nova's origins resurfaced with a thunderclap.

The next big revelation started ironically as Nova's first series was cancelled. In Nova 23 (Vol. 1), Nova encounters the villainous Doctor Sun. Sun was an obscure villain, created by Marv during his long tenure on Tomb of Dracula. Sun, a former scientist from China during the Cultural Revolution of 1966 was a disembodied brain encased in a mobile life-support chassis needing blood to keep his cerebellum alive.

It was an existence that over the years had driven Sun inexorably insane coupled with a burning desire to achieve immortality - at any cost. Learning of Nova's extraterrestrial origins Sun captures Nova and takes him back to the Nova-PRIME ship. There, Sun learns that PRIME is just the tip of the proverbial iceberg - millions of Xandarian brains exist in a larger, more complex unity, on their pod world called Xandar. Determined to learn how the Xandarians managed to find a way to preserve living neural tissue, Sun decides to take a little trip.

However Sun holds a key aspect in Richard's own future development as he is the first to recognize that Centurions have far more abilities than teenage Nova yet knows of. Again an intriguing possibility is that if Wolfman had carried on writing Nova we could have seen Rich utilizing Gravimetric Pulses and Stargates far, far earlier. A hint of the master plan crops up in Marvel Two In One Annual 3 when Rich shows off his ability to create space warps by riding gravimetric eddies from an exploding supernova – a prequel to the now familiar concept of Richard opening stargates to transverse huge distances across intergalactic space in an instant!

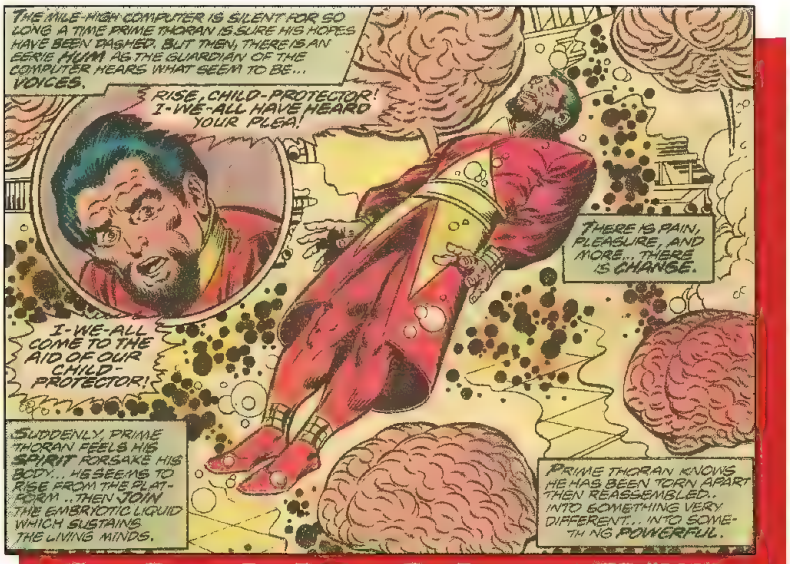
Arriving on Xandar, having survived the apocalypse inflicted upon it by the Lumphoids due to the intervention of a Watcher – something I might add has never been explained – Nova fans got their first true look at the technology behind Nova's SF origins – provided by Keith Pollard's visual treat of the living computers itself a wonderful homage to the Krell computer complex seen in Forbidden Planet.

Prime Thoran Rul, Queen Adora's advisor and the Living Computer's caretaker, explains the concepts behind the Living Computers – reaffirming glimpses seen during the PRIME sequences in Nova 8. In Xandarian society – death is not the end, not a taboo – death is only the beginning. Before physical death occurs, Xandarians allow their living brains to be surgically removed and deposited into the Hub; a complex "over a mile high" (although by modern Nova standards – it can be actualized that its considerable far bigger than a mile, encompassing the core of the entire Orienta shard, at least several hundred square kilometers). Xandarians believed that every individual, irrespective of rank, creed, background possess knowledge that was too valuable to lose. In essence they created the ultimate "think-tank" – a vast, ever changing library accumulating information, a complete spectrum of Xandarian society and culture, a living link to their rich past.

MYSTERIOUSLY SURROUNDED BY FIELDS OF FORCE WHICH KEPT OUR ATMOSPHERE INTACT.
MARVEL COMICS GROUP
FANTASTIC FOUR
SKRULLS ARE BACK! MENACING THAN EVER!
DIE, YOU EARTH DOGS! THE SKRULLS SHALL RULE SUPREME!
ANDROMEDA ATTACKS!
WHAT WAS THE WATCHER UP TO WHEN HE SAVED THE XANDARIAN CITIES? (FF #204)

To us Terrans – such a means of information preservation could be conceived as monstrous – something found in a typical 1950's B- movie. A good example being Donavan's Brain. And yet, cast back the veil of time to the time of the ancient Egyptians. Like the Sphinx, they believed the brain, heart and primary lungs were instrumental in ensuring a Pharaoh, when mummified, his passage to the afterlife. The heart was considered the most valued organ –weighed against a solitary feather by Anubis – and only if the cosmic balance was satisfactory maintained would a Pharaoh be granted passage to the land of the Gods. However –coming forward a few millennia – to the latter part of the 20th Century, certain pioneers of exotic sciences – dubbed Transhuminists – valued the practices of the Egyptians. A select number of wealthy Californians – have paid huge fees to have their bodies and brains cryogenically frozen with the idea of being reanimated one day when genetic engineering reaches a point when humans can be cloned. However, far closer to modern day interpretation of Xandarian technology – scientists in Switzerland are even now developing means to transfer human memories into silicon wafers using quantum physics. I'm pretty certain Marv Wolfman would have loved to incorporate that if he was still writing Nova!

However "why" the Xandarians created the Living Computers has never been explored in Nova mythos. Early Xandarian history is still ripe for exploration which sadly seems to be something that even Abnett and Lanning didn't get a chance to touch upon. All that is known is that The Living Computers are ancient, potentially pre-dating the Kree Supreme Intelligence by a few thousand millennia.


THE MILE-HIGH COMPUTER IS SILENT FOR SO LONG A TIME PRIME THORAN IS SURE HIS HOPES HAVE BEEN DASHED. BUT THEN, THERE IS AN EERIE HUM AS THE GUARDIAN OF THE COMPUTER HEARS WHAT SEEM TO BE... VOICES.
RISE, CHILD-PROTECTOR! I-WE-ALL HAVE HEARD YOUR PLEA!
THERE IS PAIN, PLEASURE, AND MORE... THERE IS CHANGE.
I-WE-ALL COME TO THE AID OF OUR CHILD-PROTECTOR!
SUDDENLY PRIME THORAN FEELS HIS SPIRIT FORSAKE HIS BODY... HE SEEMS TO RISE FROM THE PLATFORM ..THEN JOIN THE EMBRYOTIC LIQUID WHICH SUSTAINS THE LIVING MINDS.
PRIME THORAN KNOWS HE HAS BEEN TORN APART THEN REASSEMBLED. INTO SOMETHING VERY DIFFERENT... INTO SOMETHING POWERFUL.
Prime Thoran Rul Becomes The Protector (FF #206)

However it was FF207/208 that defied another key aspect of the Living Computers – their connection to the Nova Force – itself still an enigma. The Nova Force gives powers to Xandarians serving in the Nova Corps – it was this power that the Skrulls craved in order to find a way to end their long war with the Kree- the same power that Doctor Sun craved to give him true immortality and for the Sphinx a means to end his own long existence. FF 206 is significant as we get to see the first time how the Living Computers bestow powers to a Xandarian – in this case Prime Thoran who becomes the Protector.

The Worldmind/Living Computers are a bio-organic/tech synthesis. Living neural clusters. Wetware. Minds "engrams" working inside a vast neural network creating a bio-processing machine of infinite quantum complexity. Prime Thoran Rul gets immersed inside the vat containing the brains, and finds his biological DNA altered, becoming something "very powerful." The full extent of how "powerful" a Xandarian can get is later realized when Garthan Saal gets the whole load and became Supernova. Here, an empowered Thoran, whose role not only acted as caretaker but also the "voice" of the Living Computers - leads the Novas against the retreating Skrull armada. But it's a missed opportunity – most of the action takes place off panel. In fact a lot of Nova's involvement during the final days of the Xandar/Skrull war is sidelined in favor of following the FF who have to deal with the power-mad Sphinx, roping in Galactus and creating a memorable new Herald, Terrax the Tamer. Unfortunately we also got H.E.R.B.I.E. (Johnny Storm wasn't available for the cartoon series) and Doctor Sun getting his come-uppance*. But even so we get a few glimpses, notably Richard's involvement on Epyrus 7 first mentioned by Chris Marrinan in Volume 2 of Nova's solo series and later in Vol. 3 under the helm of Erik Larsen. Plot strands still ripe for exploration.

Richard probably learned more about the Living Computers, as well as Xandarian culture, during his year long period in space. By time Richard reappeared in ROM 24, the war was over and a homesick Rich gives up everything to return to friends and family. It seems we wouldn't get anymore insights into the nature of the Worldmind. But then, along came the New Warriors, Fabian Nicieza, the 90's and the brilliant Starlost Saga arc....

If any story defines DnA's Nova series, it's the Starlost Saga (NW 40-42). All the basics for post Annihilation Nova are here. While Richard flipped burgers at a local Queens's deli, out in space, Xandar was being systematically wiped out by the erstwhile Granddaughter of Thanos, Nebula.

Xandarians decided to create a "get out of this jam" failsafe. Known as the Xandarian Restoration Protocols, in the event that the culture ever faced certain decimation, the Living Computers would transfer the near entire Nova Force into one candidate – to safeguard it until a time when Xandar could be restored. But this move had serious liability. Too much Nova Force would drive that unfortunate candidate insane. Garthan Saal, Centurion, gets the whole load and goes on a rampage, first to wipe out Nebula and take out anyone associated with her - this invariably leads him to Earth.

While the Avengers initially deal with Supernova, a despondent Rich decides that living without his powers has become a burden. Enter, Dwayne Taylor and a rooftop fall. At the time it's a lucky coincidence, Rich gets an adrenalin surge and before you can say Blue Blazes gets his powers back - but later it turns out (Avengers 260) that Queen Adora and the Living Computers chose Rich to house Xandar's "spirit" and a "little slice of Nova Force" – this final act before Adora's "first" death cementing Richard's role in the New Warriors.

Saal, having forsaken his revenge lust needs the lot to restore Xandar. Taking Nova to the dead bubble-world, Saal and Rich merge into a composite being. Rich fears insanity and attacks Xandarian Heralds Firelord and Air Walker, even the Shi'ar Imperial Guard show up! However tragedy is averted - for you see Adora and Worldmind having recognized Rich's indomitable spirit would negate the compelling madness of having the entire Nova Force within, something Saal couldn't control; thus Xandar is restored. Rich gets a power up and promotion as Protector of the Terran Sector of the new Starcorps, even a commendation from the Worldmind – the latter speaking to him for the first time utilizing the visage of Prime Thoran Rul.

HERE, AMIDST THE RUINS, WILL NEW LIFE FLOURISH!
--TO BETTER SERVE THE NEEDS OF XANDAR!
SHAGGATHEZZ
HERE, RICH RIDER, WILL WE COALESCE--
--BODY AND SOUL--
THE PART OF THE NOVA FORCE THAT HAD LAIN DORMANT IN YOU FOR SO LONG, RICHARD, WAS ALWAYS MEANT TO BE USED TO ACCESS THAT LARGER PART CONTROLLED BY GARTHAN SAAL.
WE KNEW, ADORA AND I, THAT EVEN UNDER THE SEDUCTION OF SUCH POWER, YOUR HEART AND SPIRIT WOULD MAKE THE RIGHT CHOICE.
NOW, WE ARE FREE TO BUILD A NEW XANDAR--CREATE A PLACE FOR OTHERS WHO HAVE LOST THEIR HOMEWORLDS AS WE HAVE--

SuperNova and Rich Rider Fulfill Their Destinies!

Later The Revived WorldMind, with the avatar of Thoran Rul, Explains To Rich His Role in the Restoration Protocols. (New Warriors #42)

During his time with the Starcorps – Adora become Richard's liaison – presumably using the Worldmind to interface directly with Richard's mind (See Nova 13.Vol.2) - often reminding the reckless Terran of his obligation to the Starcorps – similar to how Worldmind itself would eventually constantly nag Richard of his endangerment to the Worldmind Legacy. In fairness I can't blame Rich for his attitude - after all Adora allows the Shi'ar and Gladiator to kick his ass to see if he still "has what it takes" And later on the verge of discovering some conspiracy (still a mystery) within the Starcorps, Rich ends up having his status revoked – replaced by Garthan Saal. Saal's arrogance dies when he's killed by the Wraith Queen – ensuring Richard regains his status as Nova in time for the approaching Annihilation Wave – but this sets up another dangling plot line with Saal's appearance in Nova 30 apparently aiding Marik Tarcel - is Saal just an hallucination or is he one of the Ascended engrams inside the Worldmind – or is it something else. As of yet, we're still waiting....

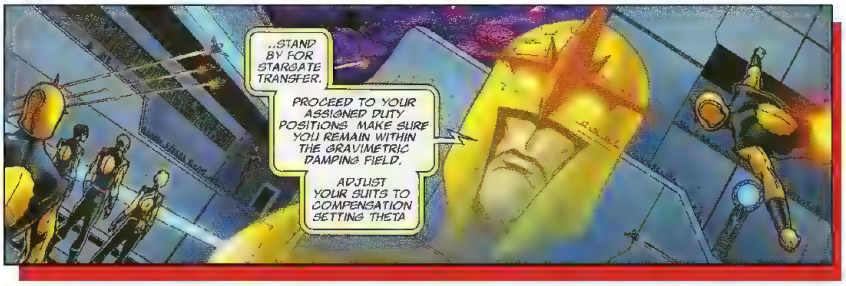
With Rich's eventual return to Xandar (Annihilation Prologue), Worldmind has taken on the key role in the functionality of the Corps, acting as its eyes and ears, linked to thousands of Nova Corp officers who try valiantly to quell the Wave forces. It's also clear that Worldmind has a few more tricks: It can data squirt directly to the mind – providing tactical data instantaneously, even maintaining medical scans, administering chemical inhibitors to keep Corpsmen hale and hearty. When Wave technology disrupts that link; all hell breaks loose. With Xandar wiped out for the third and final count, it sets the stage for Rich to reacquaint himself with the Xandarian Worldmind on a more formal footing....

While it's a bit of a contradiction that DnA's first story (Annihilation, Nova 1) ignores Rich's previous interaction with the Worldmind (maybe it's due to Rich being psychologically disoriented after injury); Rich considers the Worldmind's now arrogant self-survival/authoritarian streak like his Dad's. Giving Rich a much needed boost of endorphins and with the enemy at the gate, the last of the Nova Corps merges again with the totality of the Nova Force getting the Worldmind transferred into his synaptic neural pathways as a reluctant father-figure to help him with the burden of carrying the Nova Force, hopefully avoiding Saal's fate of insanity.

"I am the sum total of all Xandarian art, science and knowledge and you are carrying me inside your obstinate human head!" Annihilation Nova 1

With the merger done – DnA endeavor to build upon the Rich/Worldmind relationship – and it proves to be one of the most welcome aspects of Nova's fourth series. Worldmind, the sage, the nagging teacher and parent figure- often in conflict with Richard's deep down rebellious streak one minute and the next doing its best to support Richard's ideals to do whatever is right to keep the universe that bit safer. Over 36 issues – we got one of the best characterizations for a computer ever done in comics – although ISSAC and Supreme Intelligence fans may disagree but as Galactus came a calling even Worldmind couldn't escape the power of the Devourer - subsequently crashing, unable to endure against the vast energies of Galactus' siphons as they deconstruct Orbucen (Nova 14 Vol. 4).

With Worldmind offline, DnA substitute the McGuffin of the suit user interface with its limited response routines which frankly got on the nerves of a lot of Nova fans as a plot narration device –so it's welcoming that Worldmind, along with the long dead Quasar, return in issue 17. But it's evident that something isn't quite right with Worldmind. Far from being offline, Worldmind's consciousness survived – how hasn't been explained – but somehow it found Ego, the Living Planet and decided to merge with Ego's great intelligence. Not content with that, despite Richard's reluctance to reform the Nova Corps – Worldmind commenced the reformation of the galaxy's foremost peace-keeping force by initially empowering five Centurions –creating the stepping stone to go full tilt by mass-recruiting Earth's populace – an act with leads an ever defiant Richard Rider to once again lose his rank and status.


..STAND BY FOR STARGATE TRANSFER.
PROCEED TO YOUR ASSIGNED DUTY POSITIONS. MAKE SURE YOU REMAIN WITHIN THE GRAVIMETRIC DAMPING FIELD.
ADJUST YOUR SUITS TO COMPENSATION SETTING THETA

Although powerless, Rich, along with the scientific brains at Project Pegasus – would find a way to combat the Worldmind's insanity – in irony caused by the Worldmind's attempt to keep Richard's mind sane while he was custodian of the Nova Force entire. In Nova 25, with help from Quasar, Richard saves the Worldmind from itself, taking once again his rightful mantle of Nova Prime, expunging Ego's corrupting influence forever, but not without cost. Worldmind's guide personality is damaged – beyond repair - and so as a last act of healing – the Worldmind literally gets a new face.

"I expunged my old personality and installed a new one. Like I told you I was going to do. Do try to keep up Rider". Worldmind 2.2 Nova 25

During the events of Nova 25, only two of the billions of engrams within the Worldmind collective were spared from Ego's corrupting influence. The first is Rhoman Dey, who gave Richard his powers in the first place. The other is Ko-Rel, a Kree Medico who is conscripted by a severely injured Richard during the Phallax incursion. When Richard became a Select, Ko-Rel fought hard to survive against Richard and his lover Gamora but it was a fight she inevitably lost. And just as a copy of Richard's own mind is protected –giving him the means to curtail the trans-mode infection – so are Ko-Rel's personality and memories are added to the Worldmind collective. Thus Ko's engrams become the Worldmind's new guide personality – creating a new dynamic for the Rich/Worldmind partnership.

Initially Worldmind/Ko has a more sarcastic nature than the previous stoic tones of Guide Personality one. However, as issues progress – the personality slowly begins to adapt back to a more respectful interpretation – often as seen in the Thanos Imperative – very more protective – showing genuine deep concern when Richard finds himself in the depths of the Cancerverse. It's a partnership that, as we head into the middle of 2011 – now in hiatus – Nova and Starlord trapped in the imploding Cancerverse – and the Nova Force and Worldmind silent. How long? Time will tell.

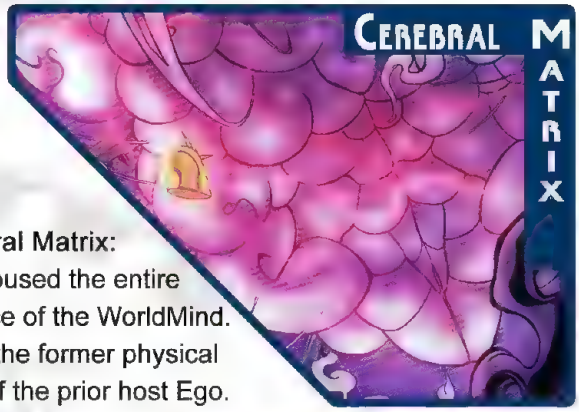
But as we wait for Marvel to revel their ultimate fate, other versions of the Worldmind play out in the realms of fan fictions and webcomics. For example, take my own Nova619 series – where Richard is presently custodian not only to the entire Nova Force with means to control it far more fluidly than his 616 counterpart – he also has access to "Xander" – Worldmind's latest personality whose memory engrams are based on....well, I'm not telling!

In closing, Richard Rider and the Worldmind became a near unstoppable partnership – one that Marv Wolfman would ultimately be very proud of.

NU-XANDAR

Nu-Xandar was a home for the WorldMind and a base of operations for the Nova Corps. This planetary body was the bio-mass entity known as Ego, The Living Planet. Within Nu-Xandar, the WorldMind had created a number of areas for the Nova Corps. *(Not pictured: the Refectory cafeteria area)*

System Operations: The area where Centurions provided field operatives with assignments and coordinated missions with WorldMind.

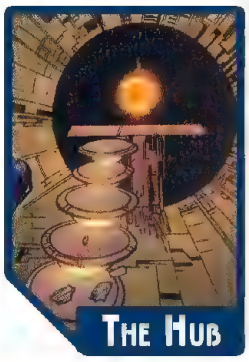


Cerebral Matrix: This housed the entire essence of the WorldMind. It was the former physical brain of the prior host Ego.

Medical Bay: Facilities to repair and heal injured Centurions.

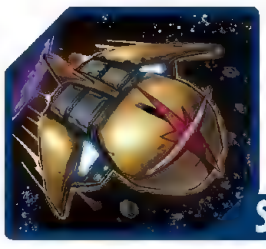
Exterior: Originally contained the features of Ego. It later presented the face of Ko-Rel. The WorldMind used it to communicate or deploy a tractor beam (insert) & scanners.

Training Zones: Regions that allowed Centurions to train for missions or to hone their skills.

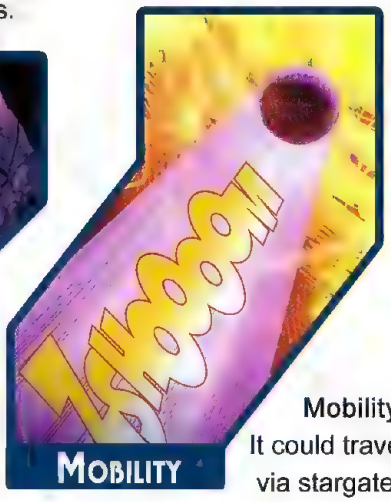


The Hub: This area contained the full energies of the Nova Force.

Accommodations: Nu-Xandar had housing facilities for recruits and members of the Nova Corps.



Shuttle Bays: Shuttles could be launched from various areas.

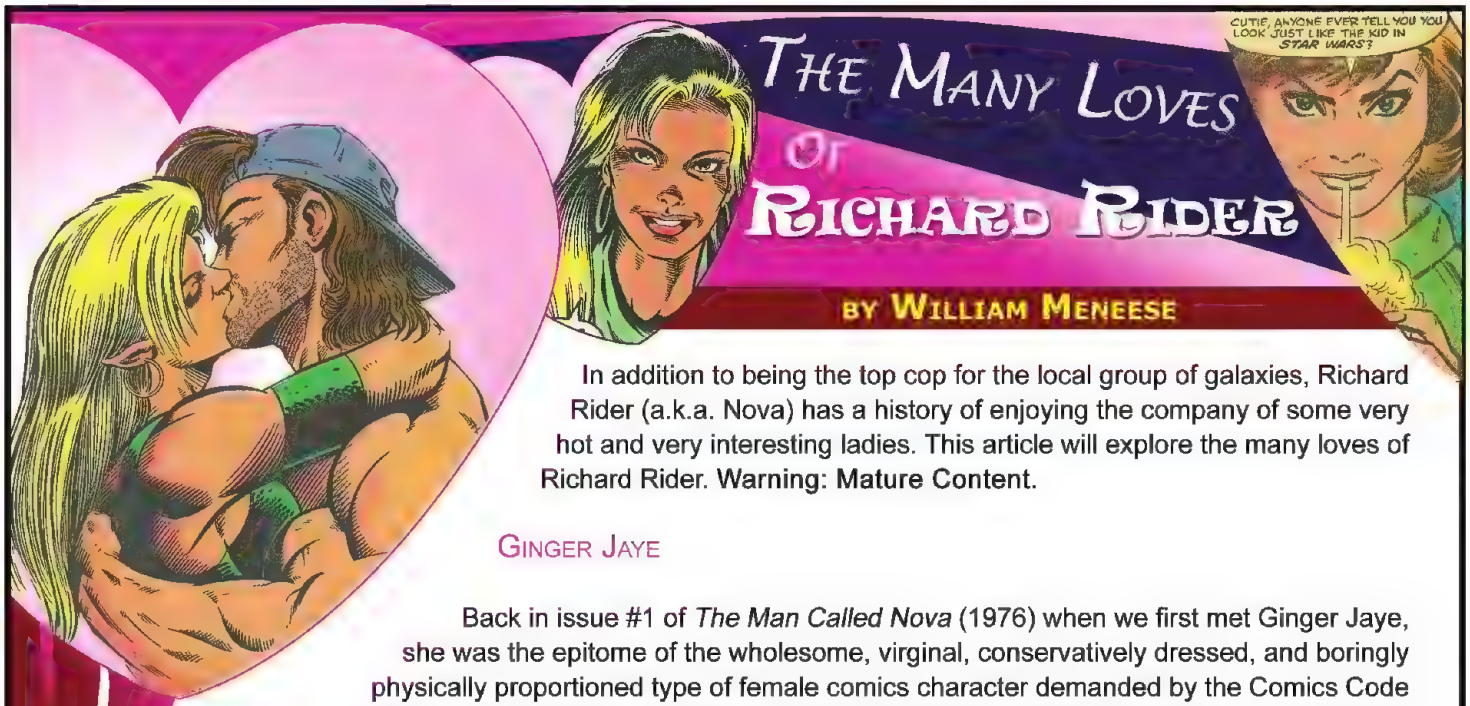


Mobility: It could travel via stargates generated by the Nova Force.

Nova Sketchbook

Nova design sketches by Timothy Green
(artist on *Rocket and Groot*)

Timothy Green's sketch
inked by Darren Blackburn



The Many Loves of Richard Rider

BY WILLIAM MENEESE

In addition to being the top cop for the local group of galaxies, Richard Rider (a.k.a. Nova) has a history of enjoying the company of some very hot and very interesting ladies. This article will explore the many loves of Richard Rider. Warning: Mature Content.

Ginger Jaye

Back in issue #1 of *The Man Called Nova* (1976) when we first met Ginger Jaye, she was the epitome of the wholesome, virginal, conservatively dressed, and boringly physically proportioned type of female comics character demanded by the Comics Code Authority. She was the archetypal girlfriend of a teen superhero of that era – sympathetic, supportive, naïve, and oblivious to blatant clues that her boyfriend was really a superhero.

She was present during Rich's power acquisition scene and was later rescued from certain death a couple of times by Nova; but we really saw little of her in Volume I. It's almost certain that there was no physical romantic relationship during Volume I. Later, in Volume III, the 1999 *Nova: The Human Rocket* series, we learned that Ginger married after high school while Rich was on Xandar fighting in the second Xandar-Skrull War. In Volume III there is a story thread about Rich and Ginger's unfinished relationship and about Ginger being the victim of domestic violence. It's kind of implied that Rich and Ginger hooked up when her marriage went south. Rich intervenes when Ginger's husband becomes abusive, accidentally mortally wounding the man. The last we see of Ginger Jaye, she testifies against Rich in the trial surrounding the death of her husband. Rich is found not guilty.

Now, in the 2008 *Nova* Volume IV Annual, writers Abnett and Lanning presented a modern (and likely non-continuity) partial re-boot of the Nova origin story with a version of Ginger Jaye that would likely have the CCA Inspectors in a tizzy were they to be censoring Marvel comics today. Known by fans as "Goth Ginger," this new version of Ginger Jaye was the antithesis of the 1976 CCA-Approved version. Dressed in Goth attire and spouting colorful language at the drop of a hat; this very interesting Ginger re-boot didn't get near enough page time to suit this writer. It's unknown if Rich had a physical romantic relationship with this version of Ginger. I wouldn't mind it at all if DnA did a full modernized re-boot of the origin story at some point as long as they retain this version of Ginger Jaye.

Laura Dunham

This little blonde hottie was Rich's main squeeze during a good part of Volume I of *The New Warriors* and Volume II of *Nova* (1994). She was aware of Rich's secret identity and was nearly killed in a fight between Rich and The Condor. Later, she was the third arm of the love triangle between herself, Rich, and Namorita.

The relationship with Rich was explored very little over the course of the series and it's unknown how physical the relationship became. We do know that Rich eventually chose Namorita over Laura.

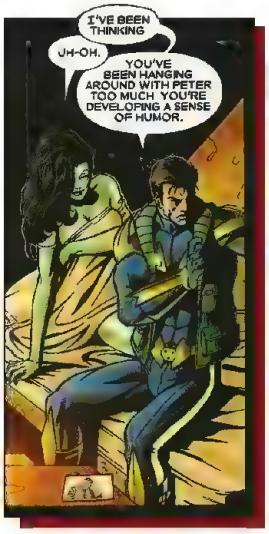
Laura Discovers There Is More To Rich Than Just A Ponytail! (From Nova #2 v2)

Namorita "Nita" Prentiss

Rich's first super-hottie girlfriend was Nita Prentiss. They became lovers over the course of their time together as teammates during Volume I of *The New Warriors*. Their romance was tempestuous to say the least. To begin with, Rich and Nita were competitors over who would be the powerhouse of *The New Warriors*. Rivalry turned to romance and soon Rich and Nita would be seen ready to get naked in the hot tub at the Crash Pad. Things took a turn for the worse when Rich ran out on Nita during her mutation from the white-skinned Namora look-alike to the blue-skinned and tattooed Kymaera. I often wondered if Rich's reaction was involuntary due to unresolved PTSD issues from the Epyrus event. Then again, I may just be making excuses for his bad behavior.

Nita got her revenge by sleeping with Rich's best friend, Bernie. Their relationship cooled for a long while and each went on to date others. At the time of the *New Warriors* mini-series just prior to Civil War, Rich and Nita appeared to barely tolerate each other. Of course, Nita was subsequently killed in the Stamford Incident precipitating the Marvel Civil War; and Rich didn't find out about it until he returned to Earth after *Annihilation*.

His feelings about Nita's death were unfortunately never explored until she unexpectedly showed up in Issue #32 of Volume IV of the *Nova* series still alive as she was plucked out of time or out of an alternate universe (it has never been made clear exactly which). There we learned that Rich considers Nita the love of his life. Unfortunately, due to events depicted in *The Thanos Imperative*, Rich and Nita's new relationship was not developed or explored. Hopefully, when Nova eventually returns we'll see how this resumed relationship develops



Gamora

Koo-koo-kachoo Mrs. Robinson……Sorry. Couldn't help myself. That song always plays in my head when I think about our boy Rich's "friends with benefits" relationship with this green-skinned ultra-hottie. This war romance came as somewhat of a surprise to all of us delighted fans when we turned a page in Annihilation #1 to find our boy dressing after a steamy session with this vixen of the spaceways. Lucky bastard. A very naked in bed and apparently very satisfied Gamora dismisses Rich back to his soldiering duties. Guess he's not called "The Human Rocket" for nothing.

Later on, during Conquest, we learned that their relationship had cooled over the course of the Annihilation war as Rich had some issues with Gamora's brutal methods of interrogating prisoners. Gamora apparently was more hurt by this development than she initially indicated. Apparently, as we learned during Conquest, she had deeper feelings for Rich than he had for her. They hooked up again just after Conquest when Rich convinced her to join The Guardians of the Galaxy. Apparently, there have been no further hook-ups since that time. Too bad. If I was Rich, this is the one I'd go for in a New York Second!

Summary

So, dear readers, this ends the summary of the many loves of Richard Rider. DnA said in an interview a few years ago that there would be a love triangle in Rich's life if the series lasted long enough. With Nova Volume IV cancelled, I guess we'll never know how the triangle formed and who besides Rich made up the triangle. Was it to be Nita and Gamora? Two new lucky ladies? I hope we find out some day!

Advertisement

And We Have Liftoff... Human Rocket
Human Rocket
Still Available - The Scene That Will Bring Down The Industry
Annihilation
Purchase These Fine Products At A Store Near You

Did You Know? In college, Rich Rider was able to get a date with the hottest girl at ESU after he joined the baseball team. The date was a disaster as Rich and Jennifer Smith learned they had absolutely nothing in common.

(Nova The Human Rocket #7)

Marvel Adventures Super Heroes

WITH PAUL TOBIN

A Look At The Avengers' Young Hip Super Hero

When the All-Ages title, Marvel Adventures Super Heroes, decided to create a new team of Avengers, editor Nate Cosby and writer Paul Tobin chose Nova to join the ranks. However, instead of choosing to use the main Marvel continuity version, the creative team created a Nova that was a rookie with a wisecracking attitude more along the lines of Marv Wolfman's original character.

RB: When did you first become a Nova fan and what was it about the character that you found appealing?

PT: I can remember picking up a group of the 1970's Nova comics, and liking the sheer energy of both the storytelling and the character. He was like a new Spider-Man to me. Spidey, by that time, had become pretty confident in his abilities, but Nova was unsure of himself... finding his own way, and that search for identity and confidence was something I found appealing.

RB: The Marvel Adventures Nova harkens back to his early days as a superhero with a modern twist. What led you to take that approach versus the older and more experienced version of the Marvel Universe (616) Nova?

PT: With the group composed of Captain America, Iron Man, Sue Storm, Vision, Black Widow and Thor... EVERYBODY was a commanding figure. EVERYBODY was a possible team leader, and I wanted a wild card that wasn't sure what to do. So while I saw Nova as a guy that was confident of his powers, he wasn't as confident as to what to do with them, and how he fit in with the greater superhero world. One way to stress that was to keep him young... the bright new rookie with a ton of potential, and an eagerness to bring into play.

RB: How did Nova view his teammates and being on the world's foremost superhero team? How did they view him and how did their perspectives change over time?

PT: Over times, I think Nova began to feel like he belonged. He was still nervous, but it was the nervousness of personality, rather than awe of the others. And I think the rest of the Avengers were fairly receptive to his presence from the start... BUT ... they were relieved that he did go on to reward their faith in him.

RB: As a writer, how do you find Nova's "voice" and do you find him to be an easy character to write?

PT: Writers go through ups and downs of confidence. Usually we choke away the "downs" but in my case I could use them to get into Nova's head... see where HE felt that he stood. He has all the power to be at the front lines, but still some insecurity (false at it may be) that others might not want him there.

First Appearance - Marvel Adventures Super Heroes #18

RB: During the Marvel Adventures Super Heroes series, we saw Nova take on one of his original foes Diamondhead. Were there other Nova villains you'd liked to have had Nova fight?

PT: Hmmm. The Sphinx would have been nice. Also... the Sphinx. And the Sphinx would have been great to use. And, if I'd had time... the Sphinx.

Panel from Marvel Adventures Super Heroes #20

RB: Did you have plans to show Nova's origin and how might it have been different than the original?

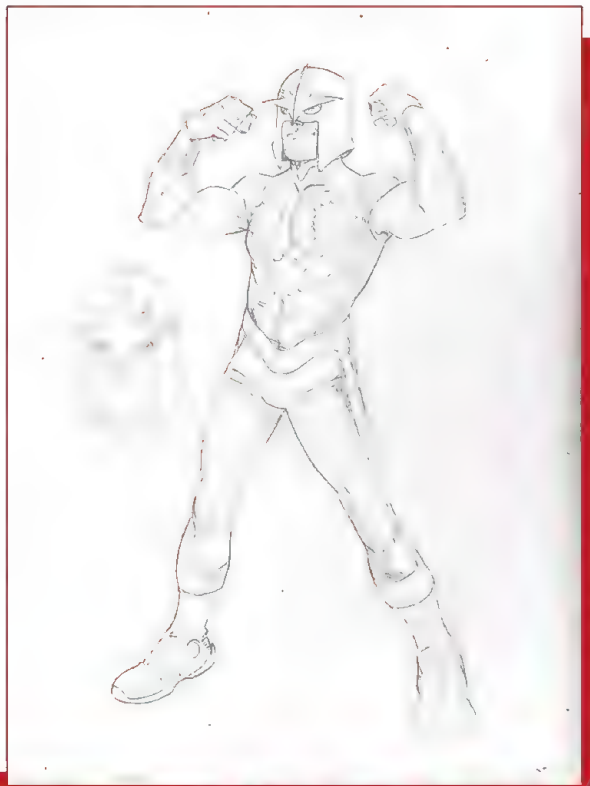
PT: No plans to delve into the origin, unfortunately. I flirted with working it into the script a couple times, but it just never really developed. Too bad... I love playing with stuff like that.

RB: In Super Heroes #10, the Black Widow from the future warns her present counterpart to be careful of Nova because "he will grow up". What was she trying to warn her about?

PT: That shall have to, for now, remain a secret.

RB: Were there other stories or plotlines about Nova that didn't get realized during the series?

PT: There are ALWAYS leftover stories. It's sad how few stories make it down on paper. Would have loved a good space epic, and Nova is so great to play off the other characters that I could have done a whole series of "Nova teams up with character X" plots.



Original Design Sketch for Nova

RB: Thanks for your time and great work, Paul!

Did You Know? Editor Nate Cosby and Paul Tobin were close to having Nova wear the New Warriors brown costume!

BUT WHAT ABOUT THAT TIME?

A Look At "Issues" In Nova's Continuity

As with any character who has been around a decent number of years, Nova has had events happen which seemingly conflict with, and even contradict, previous events in past issues. These unintentional continuity glitches can drive some fans crazy. In order to prevent rioting, health problems and help maintain sanity, we will try to address some of the speed bumps in the road trip of Nova's history and present possible explanations for them.

The Xandarian Restoration Protocols:

Q: In the Starlost Saga (New Warriors #40 - #42), Hindsight Lad reveals that one of the four domed worlds of Xandar disappeared during the attack by Nebula. Whatever happened to that city?

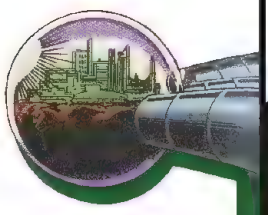
A: The answer to that question can be found in another story written years earlier. In the SuperNova Saga (Avengers #301-#303), we are first introduced to Garthan Saal who has been given all of the Nova Force and has assumed the title of SuperNova. Along with the character, we are also presented with some interesting items which may be the answer to the missing world question.

The following is speculation on the emergency plan known as the Xandar Restoration Protocols first seen in The StarLost Saga (New Warriors #40 - #42). The purpose of this theory is to resolve a few unfinished plotlines from Nova's continuity and tie together the events of the SuperNova Saga and the StarLost Saga.

These unresolved plotlines include:

1) What happened to Zorr's starship in Earth orbit? (The Man Called Nova #1)
2) How was Xandar able to fight off the Skrull Empire in the Xandar/Skrull War? (Fantastic Four #203-#209 & Rom #24)
3) Why did Zorr & SuperNova's ships seem similar in design yet had a Xandarian influence (FF #203 & Avengers #301)?
4) What was the purpose of SuperNova's mission to Earth (Avengers #301-#303 & NW #40-#42)?
5) Given his level of power, why did SuperNova need a ship and why were physical brains on board (Avengers #301)?
6) What happened to the missing domed world of Xandar during Nebula's attack (Avengers #260 & New Warriors #40)?
7) Why would the protocols require the WorldMind to be left in Xandar's ruins (New Warriors #41-#42)?

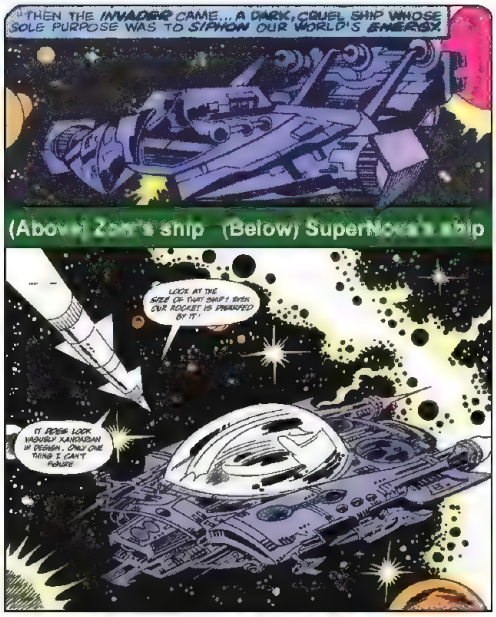
The Xandar Restoration Protocols were set in place sometime after the Xandar/Skrull War when the Xandarians realized their world, culture and technology had faced complete extinction from the Skrulls. As a result, the Protector and Queen Adora initiated a series of primary directives that would allow the Xandarians to survive even if their domed worlds were completely destroyed.



These directives included:

A) Salvation of one of the domed worlds (the one housing the Living Computers).
B) A number of its citizens in order to continue the species.
C) The preservation of the Nova Force.

To achieve the first two goals, the Xandarians required a method to transport a city to safekeeping. Ironically, they decided to use a vessel which had nearly caused their original destruction; the Luphomoid starship of Zorr. After destroying the original Xandarian homeworld and being left empty in Earth orbit following Zorr's death (The Man Called Nova #1, Fantastic Four #203), the starship was retrieved by the Xandarians in the early days of their conflict with the Skrulls. A ship capable of planetary-scale destruction, along with the Nova Prime Starship, would have allowed a small world consisting of four domed cities to survive the assault of an empire (Fantastic Four #203-#209 & Rom #24).


THEN THE INVADER CAME... A DARK, CRUEL SHIP WHOSE SOLE PURPOSE WAS TO SIPHON OUR WORLD'S ENERGY.
LOOK AT THE SIZE OF THAT SHIP! BY COMPARISON, OUR ROCKET IS DWARFED BY IT!
IT DOES LOOK VAGUELY XANDARIAN IN DESIGN... ONLY ONE THING I CAN'T FIGURE
(Above) Zorr's ship (Below) SuperNova's ship

However, if they were to face an even greater singular force, the starship would be large enough to take one of the domed cities to safety and powerful enough to provide it with protection and security. The Xandarians greatly modified the starship to be compatible with their technology and created a large circular docking port in the center to hold the domed city. The technological modifications would also allow the ship to hold the physical brains of the Living Computers and a large number of Xandarian citizens.

With the citizens and Living Computers safely stored on the starship, the entire Nova Force (minus a small sliver) would be given to a chosen Xandarian. It mostly likely would have been the Centurion Nova Prime who led the Nova Corps. The CNP would have been judged to be the strongest and most stable of the Xandarians and the Nova Corps to hold the enormous energy of the entire Nova Force. At the time, Adora's husband, Tanak Valt, was the Centurion Nova Prime following the surrender of the power by Richard Rider of Earth.

When Nebula arrived in Sanctuary II and attacked Xandar as revenge for her father Zorr's death (Avengers #260), the Protector and Adora activated the protocols. The domed world containing the physical brains of the Living Computers and the chosen citizens were moved into the starship with the citizens placed into suspended animation to save resources. However, Valt was killed alongside his allies in the Champions of Xandar soon after Nebula's attack began. With Valt dead, the choice was made to use Garthan Saal (either by random or he was second in line) as the recipient of the Nova Force. Saal may not have been properly prepared to receive the power or his mental condition wasn't as stable as Valt's. It was decided that Saal was acceptable since the Living Computers would be with him on the starship to keep him sane.

WHAT DO YOU THINK THOSE THINGS WERE?
A QUICK ANALYSIS TELLS ME THEY'RE COMPONENTS OF THE XANDARIANS' LIVING COMPUTER WHICH I ONCE SAW.*
THEY MUST HAVE BEEN THE MECHANISMS BY WHICH THE BRAINS OF DECEASED XANDARIANS WERE PRESERVED.
Avengers #301

The one sliver of Nova Force not given to Saal had been given to Richard Rider of Earth albeit in a dormant state. Adora felt that Rider had embodied the spirit of Xandar and his location on Earth would ensure that the Nova Force would be secure. Before Nebula destroyed Xandar completely, Adora was able to send the sliver of Nova Force to Rider and she died soon afterwards (Nova: The Human Rocket #1). The protocols required the bearer of the Nova Force (Saal) to take the starship to Earth's solar system. Once the ship was safely in orbit, Saal would locate Rider and awaken his powers. With all of the Nova Force active on the same dimensional plane, Saal and Rider would merge forms and become the living embodiment of the Nova Force. It was decided that Rider (with the stronger will) would take conscious control of the Nova Force and use it to energize the domed city. The Xandarians would begin rebuilding Xandar on an uninhabited world somewhere in the universe.

SUPER-NOVA WILL RAVAGE THE EARTH AND LEAVE IT A SMOLDERING CINDER UNLESS THE WOMAN CALLED NEBULA APPEARS AND--
BA-
--VENGEANCE IS MINE!!

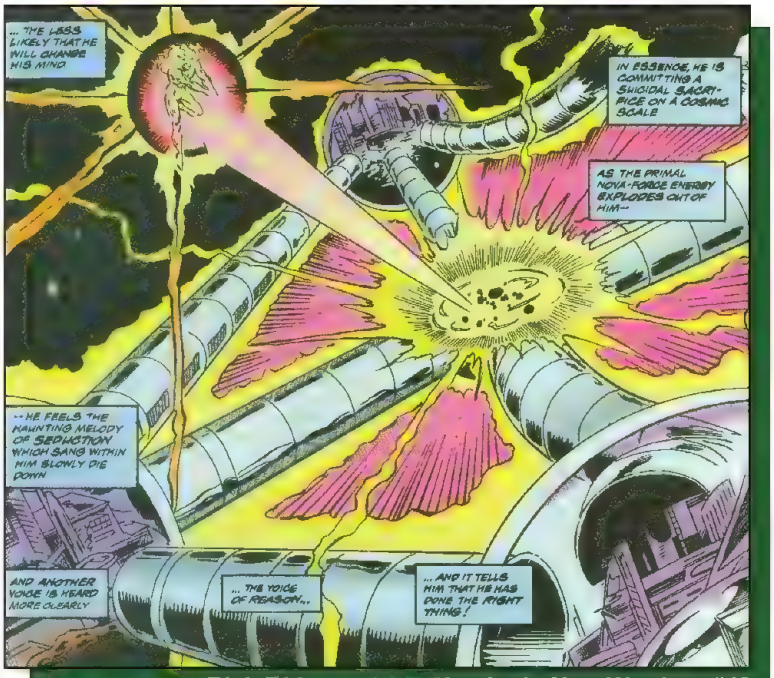
However, the Nova Force was too much for Saal's mental state and he went insane from the power (Avengers #301-#303). Saal (now called SuperNova) chose to pursue Nebula in order to gain revenge. The Living Computers attempted to control and protect SuperNova until they could get to Earth but failed. Following a battle with the Avengers, Saal lost complete control and destroyed the starship in an enormous gravimetric pulse (Avengers #301).

SuperNova destroys the Xandarian city ship in Avengers #301

Despite the destruction of the starship, the Xandarians were able to survive. The Restoration Protocols also contained a secondary, although riskier, set of actions. On Xandar, a non-organic backup database of the entire knowledge of Xandar called the WorldMind was taken to the most secure location inside one of the remaining domed cities. This secure location would also contain cloning equipment along with a DNA sample of Queen Adora. In the event that the starship was destroyed, Saal was to reactivate Rider's powers which would also remotely activate the cloning equipment on Xandar.

Once Saal and Rider returned to Xandar, they would reactivate the dormant WorldMind. This secondary set of protocols was much riskier than the primary since there was no guarantee that the secured location would survive Xandar's destruction.

However, as history shows (New Warriors #40-#42), the Restoration Protocol's secondary plan was successful in restoring Xandar. The only action not necessary was the reactivation of Rider's powers by Saal since Night Thrasher had already done this for his own agenda (New Warriors #1).


... THE LESS LIKELY THAT HE WILL CHANGE HIS MIND
IN ESSENCE, HE IS COMMITTING A SUICIDAL SACRIFICE ON A COSMIC SCALE
AS THE PRIMAL NOVA-FORCE ENERGY EXPLODES OUT OF HIM--
--HE FEELS THE HAUNTING MELODY OF SEDUCTION WHICH SANG WITHIN HIM SLOWLY DIE DOWN
AND ANOTHER VOICE IS HEARD MORE CLEARLY
... THE VOICE OF REASON...
... AND IT TELLS HIM THAT HE HAS DONE THE RIGHT THING!
Rich Rider restores Xandar in New Warriors #42

Q: In New Warriors #37 v1, Robert Rider lost the little finger on his left hand while being held hostage by Poisoned Memories. However, during the Nova (2007) series, Robbie is shown with all ten digits. How did that happen?

It's most likely that while Robbie was employed at Project PEGAGUS, he and his fellow scientists used the facilities genetic resources to grow himself another finger.

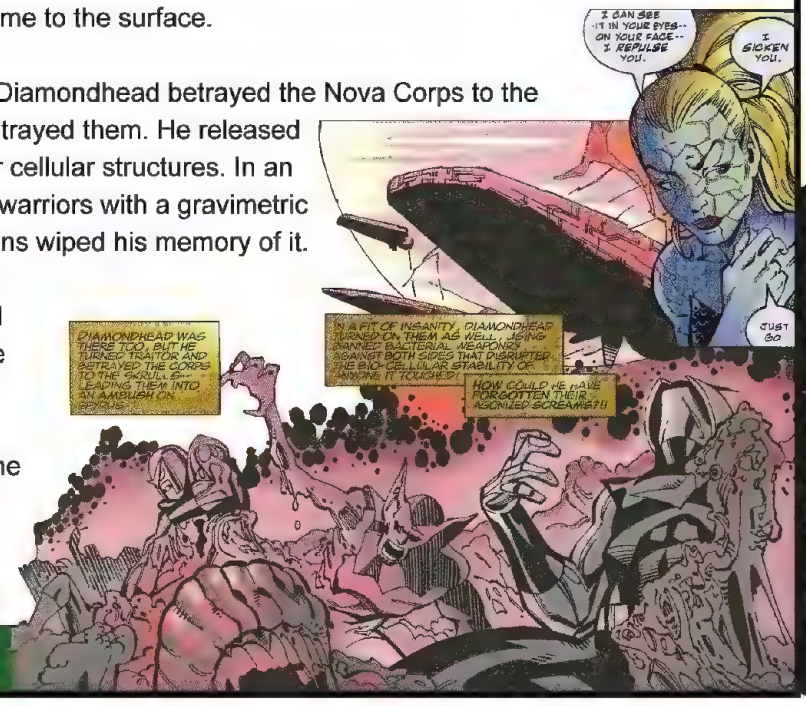
Marvel's Reply To This Scenario (from Bill Rosemann - Editor of Nova): "That's how we saw it, too."

Q: In Nova: The Human Rocket #1, Nova seems to act out of character when he rejects Namorita's plea for help when she finds her blue skin pealing and burning. Why did he have that type of reaction?

it's very possible that when Nova saw Namorita in the deteriorating condition she was in, it caused the subconscious memories of what happened on Epyrus 7 to start to come to the surface.

During the Skrull/Xandar War on the planet Epyrus 7, Diamondhead betrayed the Nova Corps to the Skrulls. Unknown to the Skrulls, Diamondhead also betrayed them. He released a bacterial weapon on both sides which dissolved their cellular structures. In an act of mercy and anger, Nova disintegrated the Corps warriors with a gravimetric pulse. The incident was so traumatic that the Xandarians wiped his memory of it.

Seeing Namorita wasn't enough to bring the repressed memories fully to the surface but it was enough that he recoiled from her. During Nova's second series, Diamondhead was able to start Rich's memory recall of Epyrus 7. Namorita's condition brought it closer to the surface. In the next issue of Nova of Larsen's run, Diamondhead appeared and all he had to do was say Epyrus 7 for the full memories to come to the surface.


I CAN SEE IT IN YOUR EYES-- ON YOUR FACE-- I REPULSE YOU.
I SICKEN YOU.
JUST GO
DIAMONDHEAD WAS THERE TOO, BUT HE TURNED TRAITOR AND BETRAYED THE CORPS TO THE SKRULL S-- LEADING THEM INTO AN AMBUSH ON EPYRUS 7!
IN A FIT OF INSANITY, DIAMONDHEAD TURNED ON THEM AS WELL, USING BANNED BACTERIAL WEAPONRY AGAINST BOTH SIDES THAT DISRUPTED THE BIO-CELLULAR STABILITY OF ANYONE IT TOUCHED!
HOW COULD HE HAVE FORGOTTEN THEIR AGONIZED SCREAMS?!!
The Epyrus 7 Incident & Nova's rejection of Namorita

Nova 619: An Introduction

by Darren Blackburn

I've been a fan of Nova since 1980....but in an alternative universe...there was a possibility that I would never have become acquainted with Richard Rider! You see, before I turned 12 I didn't collect comics. To be truthful I just wasn't interested in them!! Back then my passions were science fiction tv shows -- notably Doctor Who (still my No.1), Space 1999, The Tomorrow People, Star Trek and non SF stuff like It's a Knockout, Blue Peter and Bruce Forsyth's Generation Game!

However one afternoon, I went to my local Newsagent and book shop which had a rack of American Marvel Comics. I flicked through them and bought a copy of Fantastic Four, issue 256, 20p. -- the second issue I got was from a "bargain box". In it was a copy of The Man Called Nova - issue 6 to be precise. My life changed that day.....

Now I don't know exactly what caught my eye about him but there was something that crossed all my mental boxes. His background was very ordinary: teenager living in Long Island, going to school -- which mirrored my own at the time as I was in Secondary School (equal to Rich's time at High School) -- dating his first love (I wasn't), had an interest in movies.... (I still do....)

Then.....wham-bam! He's becomes this very cool superhero with a bucket on his head with really good powers, real-life supporting characters and a healthy dose of science fiction added into the mix. Of course I had to fill in the gaps -- thing was, I at the time I didn't realize Nova's title had been cancelled. Searching for those issues of Nova over the next two decades (and I'm still searching even now for that illusive copy of Nova 25) really flamed my love for American comics. By then I had started collecting Marvel UK titles- Doctor Who Weekly, Alan Moore's Captain Britain...I still collect today. In fact I may need a mortgage for a new home to house them all!

But I'm digressing; sorry, habit I have! Back to Nova 619! What the das't is it you ask!!

Well, there are several reasons why I started the Nova619 project at Deviant Art. First is that I've always wanted to write Nova stories myself. Two, apart from my love of comics I've also been drawing since I was knee-high to Pip the Troll but like most things as you get older you end up being distracted -- work, parents, human drama -- which in itself acts as a great source for writing. But how to approach doing a Nova fan series, even with the added dimension of pictures and words? Well, that's a task and a half and it's been quite a task juggling this with everything else I do.

Of course the first task was choosing where to begin. Initial prep began just after Annihilation came out....long before Nova's present fate was determined in the last issue of the Thanos Imperative. You see the Marvel Universe has a very handy mechanism. It's called the Omniverse. Created by Alan Moore in those wonderful Captain Britain comics -- Marvel U.S. utilized the concept of alternative universes in their "What If?" comics -- with the premise that there are myriad divergent points in time and space where characters can end up with new lives due to the most subtle of decisions creating new realities without affecting the primary 616 reality.

Nova creator. Marv Wolfman. delved into the concept himself with "What if Nova had been four different people?" Instead of Richard Rider gaining the powers of a Centurion, Peter Parker, an unknown soldier, a crazed lady and minor crook used the Nova Force for different purposes, often creating tragic scenarios affecting millions. In a later Bill Mantlo story, having stripped Richard Rider of his powers in ROM #24, there was a story told of a Richard Rider who refused to give up his powers to protect Xandar at any cost. And in New Warriors, 616 Richard Rider briefly found himself in the alternate reality ruled by a female Sphinx and he was a member of the Avengers!

So the first thing about Nova 619 is that as the number signifies its set in an alternative timeline - so continuity wise it doesn't touch on anything you read in DnA's Nova series. And yes it means this Nova isn't trapped in the Cancerverse - or became a Select or got infected by the transmode virus....

But before anyone reading this worries, Nova 619 is Richard Rider. I mean, could Nova ever be anyone else? It's a crime that even I would never commit. In writing Richard himself, I loved the tough Richard Rider from Annihilation - which is odd as initially I felt Giffen's Richard Rider was so removed from the 70's persona. This was Rich all grown-up. He was no longer the wisecracking Peter Parker substitute - he was older, more responsible -- shaped by Drax and coming to terms of being the only Nova Centurion left after the Annihilation Wave obliterated Xandar and the Nova Corps. It was a Richard that grew on me and everyone else and even though DnA slowly, subtly re-meshed in the old '70s traits -- more Blue Blazes and so on -- essentially those around him, like Darkhawk, recognized how much life in space had changed him. So in the 619, this is the Rider template I've decided to follow, working out just one of an infinite number of divergences that he could follow but retaining the quintessential elements that define Rich for who he is.

The backdrop of Nova619 is the cold war scenario between Emperor Ronan, Lord Ravenous and Barroness S'Bak. As you'll gather these three could set the entire Universe ablaze - the peace cemented by the Armistice Treaty signed on Annihilation Day 268 is a fragile one at best – and could break at any time. The newly created Verge Senate – formerly the Galactic Council - have many issues to deal with: hundreds of worlds decimated by the Wave armada, populations in a state of re-building or in diaspora, without worlds to call their own. Crime, too, has escalated. The shadowly Veil Kartel selling illegal weapons, drugs and other nastiness on a resurgent cosmic black market aided by Veradiane mercenaries. I'm very privileged to incorporate the Veradinae species into the 619, created by Timelord in his New Nova Fictions. I hope he likes what I've done!

For Richard Rider, he has decisions to make. Where does he stand in all of this? Does he reform the Nova Corps so soon after Xandar was obliterated? Does he rekindle old alliances? Or "new" ones? Does he honor his original mission to safeguard the Worldmind? And does he still have that wicked scar on his face? And what of the prime Nova concepts? Many fans have wanted to see Xandarian history explored. Who were they? What is the Nova Force? Are there other surviving Xandarians out there? And what the hell are the Rubicon and their relation to a very old Nova foe from the past. And yes, I do have a wicked tale involving time-travel and dipping my toes on Epyrus 7!

Doing Nova 619 is a challenge. One problem with fan produced projects is that unlike their Marvel counterparts you have to do them around your real day to day life. So right from the beginning I decided to make Nova 619 an interactive project. So after I joined Deviant Art, an online art community for both professional and amateur comic artists and writers - I got talking and found out that mamy of them loved Nova. So when I suggested the idea of doing a Nova webcomic - quite a few jumped at the opportunity. To act as a hub, I formed Nova Prime DA Group.

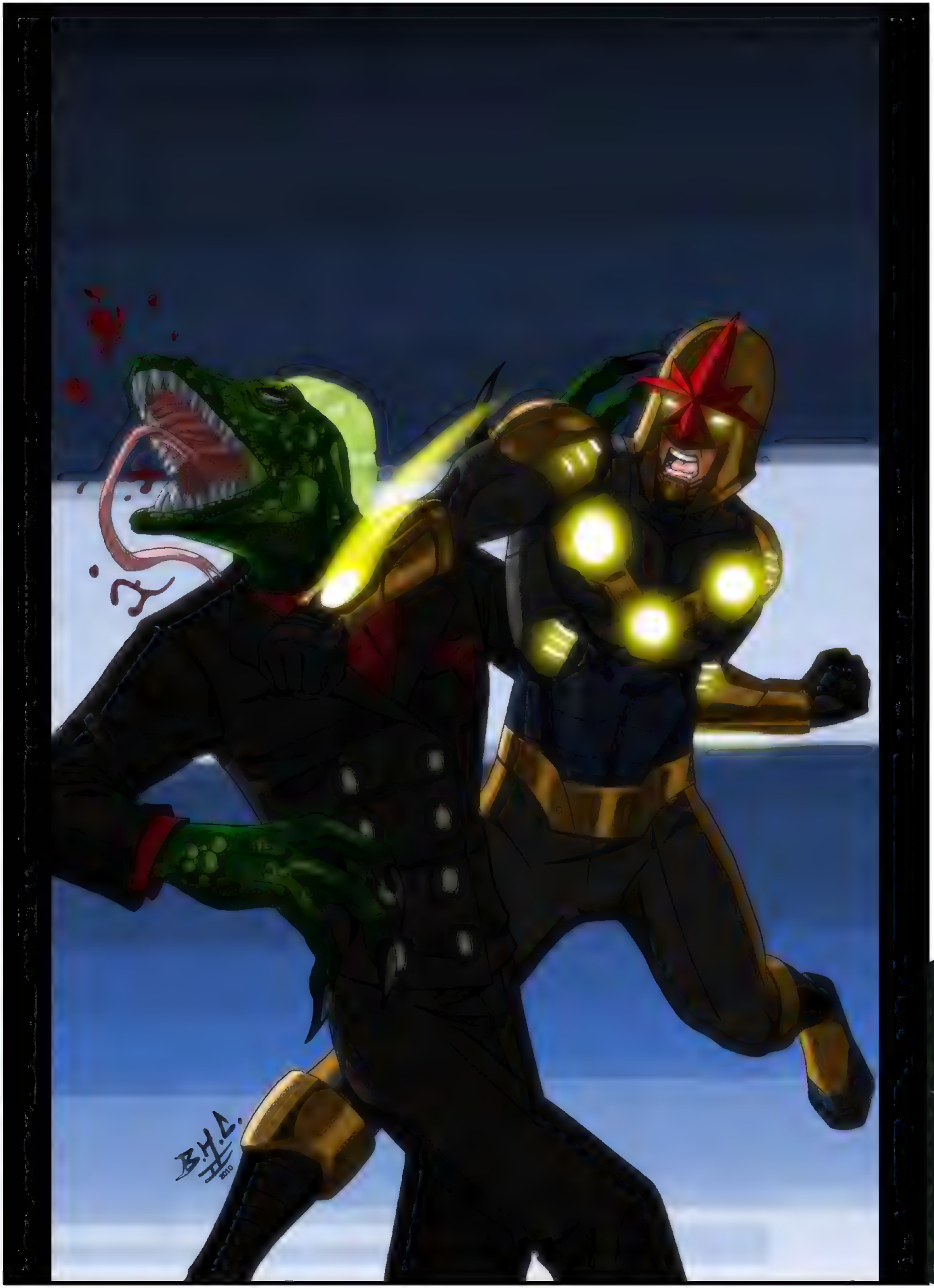
Its become quite a worldwide project. Among the many involved are Byron Brewer (USA) - from Cosmic Book News, Brandon Patterson, with myself as main series writer. On the art side we have Jason Heichel (USA), Israel Huertas and his younger brother (Spain), Tony Inkburst (UK), Marc Bourcier (Canada), Fernando Brazuna (Brazil), Fernando Arguello (Spain), Pierre Minne (France), Ionisys! (Greece) and last but not least kudos to Doug Smith at Nova Prime Page who I want to supply a plotline and Bill Menesse.

However....the project is always open to new recruits. Its totally non-profit making...there's no wages - no cash earned from it. Its a way to get to know other Nova fans across the globe and more than anything have a go adding something new - mainly new to the Novaverse...as a primary focus is creating new characters and scenarios..and most importantly... having fun!

On the next pages is a bit of the art done by the Nova619 team. If you want to visit Nova Prime DA then go to www.novaprime@deviantart.com. Registration to DA is free and if you visit and want to join the group or even become a contributor then just PM or alternatively contact me at darrenblackburn1@hotmail.co.uk. Nova 619 is online at Cosmic Book News and the Nova Prime Page!

Page 1: Nova 619 by Darren Blackburn and Marc Bourcier
Page 2: Rich and Pete by Jason Heichel
Page 3: Nova Prime cover by Barry Chandler
Page 4: Art by Tony Savage

db



Below is a sneak preview of a fan fic series about the adventures of Rich Rider's daughter, Sylvia Rider-Dru. It's being written by Nova fan William Meneese.

Nova: The Next Generation

The Veradinae War

Prologue: Earning the Stars

General Karn'al'Seleel waited impatiently for the Xandarian prisoners of war to arrive so that his victory ceremony could begin. Standing seven feet tall, he flexed his thickly muscled arms covered in rough reptilian skin and extended his biomantium coated claws in an attempt to stave off the cold. He detested this planet, called Sudana by its inhabitants. It lay on the edge of the habitable zone of a red dwarf star system and was covered in deciduous forest save for a few small settlements sparsely scattered across the major continents.

Even though it was summer in this hemisphere of the planet, it was still far too cold for Karn's tastes. He wished to conclude his business here and return to the lush, hot jungle of his native Veradin; but it was likely he would be on Sudana for an extended tour of duty as Sudana lay on the border between Xandarian and Veradinae space; and was protected by the Xandarian Federation.

The battle to control this sector of space was still raging; but the battle on the ground for Sudana had been decided in favor of the Veradinae Empire. The Xandarians had fought valiantly; but in the end they had been outnumbered 20 to 1 and it was that ratio that had won the fight. The Xandarians had been prevented from reinforcing their troops and Karn simply fought a battle of attrition.

The last of the planets Xandarian defenders would soon arrive to be paraded before the victorious Veradinae forces and presented to him for final judgment. He would decide which would go to the larder to feed the troops, which would be given to the troops to vent their rage upon, which would go to the troop's seraglio; and which, if any, would join his personal seraglio. This ceremony, considered primitive by most other races in Andromeda, was among the many reasons the Veradinae were feared; as most knew that the vast majority of prisoners would go to the larder or be given to the troops for sport. The victory ceremony was the tradition of his people and was expected by the troops; and it would take place as scheduled if the d'ast prisoner transport shuttle would just arrive.

Karn looked from the dais where he stood elevated over his amassed troops. Nearly 100,000 Veradinae Mercenaries hatched from his family's own factories waited patiently, controlled by the steady infusion of the drug, Bliss, and the knowledge that with his mere touch of a button on the control box he wore on his belt they would be denied Bliss, and thus life – as Bliss withdrawal was immediately fatal. The vast sea of disciplined, battle-hardened warriors standing before him was considered the best army in the galaxy. Even the mighty Kree respected the fighting skills of the Veradinae. He looked to the side of the dais where his cooks worked feverously to prepare his victory feast. He and his sons would dine upon the Xandarian General, the Xandarian Centurion, and the Sudananite President – all of whom he had personally slain in combat. His long forked tongue flicked to sample the smell of fresh Xandarian blood on the morning air emanating from the cooking tents.

Karn's eldest son, Savad'al'Saleel, approached him on the dais. At six feet, he stood a foot shorter than his father. His head bore the same red crest as his father's, indicating he was a member of the ruling class. His armor was painted like that of his father, bearing the symbol of the Saleel Cartel, a subsidiary of the ruling Beliim Cartel. His mouth, sporting rows of vicious serrated teeth – some covered in drops of purple venom, was open in sign of excitement and anticipation. "Father, the prisoner transport is on final approach. The prisoners have been prepared for presentation to you."

Karn's next eldest son, Cand'al'Seleel, stood to his left and presented an electronic clipboard with a list of 12 names and ranks. "Father, the 12 prisoners include a Denarian ranked Nova Corpsman and 11 Star Corps regulars. The Denarian was captured from a rescue shuttle that was shot down. She was the only survivor and she has been badly injured."

Karn was surprised. It was rare to capture a Nova Corpsman alive. "Has the Denarian been de-powered?"

Cand shook his head. "No. Restrained only. Denarians lack enough power to seriously threaten our armor as you well know. We decided to leave the powers intact for now until you passed judgment – in case you decided to give the Denarian to the troops for their sport. It might be good practice for them to kill a powered Corpsman."

Unable to argue with Cand's reasoning, Karn merely handed the clipboard back to him and turned his head to catch a view of the prisoner transport shuttle landing about 50 feet from the dais. Nictitating membranes flicked across his white eyes as he focused on the door to the shuttle. The shuttle door popped open immediately upon touchdown, disgorging six guards who quickly herded 12 Xandarian prisoners toward the dais past the jeering Veradinae troops.

Karn studied the prisoners closely. Seven Xandarian males and five Xandarian females. The prisoner first in line was the Denarian; and Karn found the Denarian's looks intriguing. He turned to Cand. "Bring me the Denarian first."

Cand spoke into his armor's microphone and one of the guards roughly grabbed the Denarian and shoved her toward the stairs of the dais, prodding her to ascend to the dais and receive General Karn's judgment.

Karn watched as the Denarian ascended the stairs. Her helmet was dented and smeared with dirt and blood. Her hands were bound in energy damping cuffs that completely covered them from view. Her uniform was torn and she walked stooped from a back injury and with an obvious limp from a wounded leg as she laboriously climbed the stairs to the dais. As she neared the top of the stairs, Savad, impatient with her slow progress in ascending the stairs, grasped her arm and dragged her the rest of the way to the dais to stand before General Karn.

Karn towered over the Denarian as she stood stooped from her back injury and cowering in fear. He looked down upon her for a long moment, taking her measure and assessing her feminine attributes as her uniform was skin tight and left little to the imagination. His sons, Cand and Savad, flanked the Denarian to the right and left awaiting his judgment and standing ready to carry it out. Karn nodded to Cand. "Remove her helmet."

Cand roughly removed the Denarian's helmet and threw it to the ground; revealing a lovely young raven-haired female with dark brown eyes. She was visibly trembling and stared at the ground, refusing to make eye contact with the General.

Karn's tongue flicked to sample the female's scent and he immediately felt desire for her. "Make her look up at me. I would like to see her face."

Savad grasped her roughly by the throat and jerked her head up, forcing her to look directly into Karn's eyes. Karn could see tears in her eyes. He brushed his long claws against her face and smiled lustfully. "Fear not young Xandarian. You will have the honor of joining my personal seraglio. My sons will de-activate the nanites in your body in order to de-power you. I will then inject you with my venom to make you my slave. Please me and you may become Queen of my seraglio. Displease me and you will die most horribly. Either way, before this day is done I will show you pleasure such as you have never known."

Karn nodded to Savad to begin the nanite deactivation process and Cand attached the necessary tech to the energy dampening cuffs restraining the Denarian's hands.

Savad looked puzzled. "Father, this Denarian has no nanites in her body; but the readings indicate that her power level vastly exceeds that of even a Centurion."

Karn turned to behold the Denarian; only to find her standing straight, looking him in the eyes, and grinning savagely. "It's a ruse! Guards…."

The energy dampening cuffs surrounding Denarian Sylvia Rider-Dru's hands exploded from a radiative gravimetric pulse, sending shrapnel in every direction and temporarily blinding Karn and his sons. Sylvia pointed one hand at Cand and the other at Savad; instantly vaporizing both of Karn's sons with gravimetric pulses. Karn reached for his side arm; but before he could un-holster it, Sylvia landed a punch to his chest; crushing his armor plating into his body.

Unable to draw breath, Karn doubled over as he helplessly gasped for air, eyes wide with terror as Sylvia grasped his head and tore it from his body. Sylvia wheeled around and threw the General's severed head at the guards and troops amassed before the stairs at ground level leading to the dais; all of whom scattered in shock and surprise as their commanders head landed among them and rolled to a stop.

Sylvia grasped the Bliss control box from the General's body, using her quantum powers to hack past the firewall that would normally render it useless in her hands. She felt the AI of the control box surrender to her superior power and triumphantly held it above her head just as the Veradinae mercenaries recovered from their shock and trained 100,000 weapons upon her.

Sylvia looked at them defiantly, knowing that they hesitated to fire simply because she held the Bliss control box and feared it would be damaged. She also knew that in an instant they would rush her en masse and attempt to physically wrest it from her grasp.

"Listen you worthless bunch of gods-d'ast schlag eating lizards! I've got control of the Bliss Box. You work for me now or I cut off your little happy drug like this!" She ordered the box to stop the flow of the drug to every one of the troops and the AI of the box complied.

She was instantly rewarded with 100,000 screams of fear and anguish and pain. She deprived them of the drug for 15 full seconds, watching with both satisfaction and fascination as one of the most fearsome armies of ground troops in the known universe was instantly reduced to a crying, moaning, helpless mass of quivering reptilian flesh. Many of the troops began to become physically sick, vomiting and soiling themselves as withdrawal symptoms advanced to the next level of lethality. She knew if she deprived them of Bliss much longer, they would all die; and as satisfying as that might be, she realized that they might just have their uses in this little war.

She ordered the Bliss Box's AI to restart the flow of Bliss at a 50% reduction from normal and watched as the mercenaries shakily regained their feet and awaited her orders.

"I am Nova Corps Denarian Sylvia Rider-Dru, Countess of Sura and your new commander. If any one of you mother-farkers has a problem with that, step forward and I'll be happy to kill you right now. Otherwise, kneel before me to demonstrate your fealty and I might just give you a little higher dosage of Bliss." She watched in satisfaction as 100,000 Veradinae Mercenaries fell to one knee. "Kneel lower you culk-sucking schmaugs!" She watched in amusement as the entire mercenary army fell to their stomachs with their faces in the dirt. "Now stay there until I decide whether to kill you or reward you."

She ordered the Bliss Box's AI to release her fellow Xandarians from their bonds and motioned for them to join her on the dais. She ordered the Xandarians to use the communications equipment in the dais' control room to contact the Xandarian Fleet to let them know that Sudana was back under Xandarian control; and to request emergency relief and reinforcement.

Turning to make her way to the stairs to descend into the mass of troops to further subjugate them, she found her path blocked by Karn's headless body. She sneered. "So you would've shown me pleasure such as I have never known? I doubt you were ever capable of that feat you worthless mother-farker." She kicked the headless body out of her way, watching it fall off the dais to the ground below.

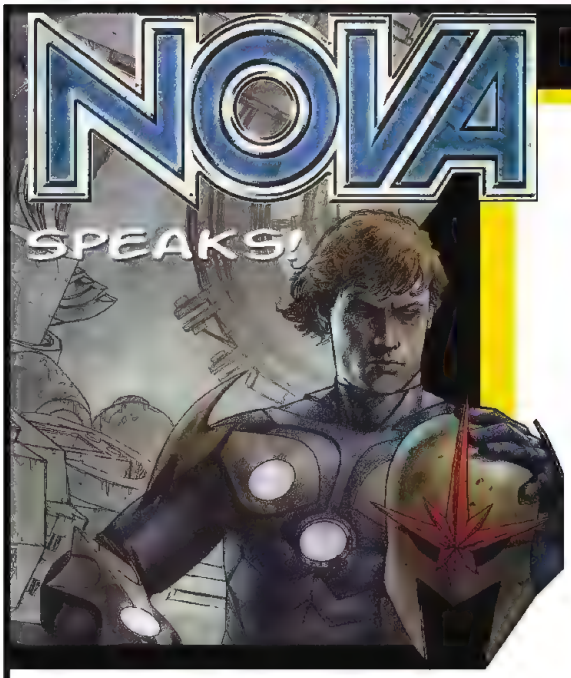
Standing at the head of the stairs with her arms akimbo and a brisk breeze blowing through her long raven hair; she inhaled deeply and looked out over her vast new army thinking to herself, *"You know, I might just get my Centurion stars for this little coup."*

NOIR
COSMIC JOKE
by Israel Huertas
The name of the planet is M´doth
A big desertic ball with six salty oceans. It used to have high volcanic activity twice in a year, but not in this season.
The inhabitants are a pacific population, dedicated to mining the most of time. They are all males, having a great cloning system to perpetuate the species.
The slave holders arrive just six hours ago, but this is the third village they´ve attacked
Free hand workers for the Shiar and Kree empires, something they both would deny if someone asked about it.
But now, things are going to change.

Okay, guys, let,s stop this great showing of unnecessary cruelty! The Nova Prime has come to save the day!
Come on, Worldmind! You,re so serious!
I,m just trying to make you relax.
It´s probably they couldn,t understand your peculiar sense of irony, Richard, even with the translation instead.

Nice weapons they have, anyway.
♦□◆■&↗
We've been working so hard lately that this appointment is a chance to have some fun.
Standard laser bracelets. Nothing special.
You're sorry, fella? That's not enough, you son of a ...
◆♎■&☹)(
Attention, Richard Rider! It is critical that you pay attention just now! Multiple weapons are targeting you now!
That has not been very polite from these guys, has it?
Well, let's finish with this. Worldmind, whole corporal gravimetric energy ray, please.
"Please"? I'm completely annoyed.

Sarcasm! That´s new!
They´re surrending, Richard.
Really? A bit obvious, don´t you think so?
Citizens are expressing their grateful feelings about your help.
Nice people.
I hope they´ll be okay from now on.
They´ll be, Richard.
What else can happend in one day?



Interview Conducted By Don Lund

The ultimate exclusive interview can finally be revealed, as Marvel's very own Human Rocket affectionately known in these parts as our favorite Buckethead, the one and only Richard Rider has finally agreed to meet with the media to discuss his blue blazing, roller coaster career as a super-hero!

[The following is a transcript from the press conference held in a hotel lobby in downtown New York City two weeks ago, exact location unknown since the "official" fate of Mr. Rider has not been determined. As superhero status goes, despite the memorial service held, the original Nova is considered "missing in action." Nova entered the press conference wearing a trench coat and sunglasses, with his famous helmet under his arm. He set the star helmet on the podium, appeared to whisper something to his helmet, and then addressed the half dozen journalists in attendance.]

Rich Rider: I am sorry, I don't have a statement to open with, I just thought it was important to reach out to the media and my fans at this time. I can go ahead and open this up to questions..

Rocket Boosters: If you are essentially lost in space, how is it that you got to be here for this conference?

Rich Rider: You do realize that it is comic book story? It is serial fiction folks, my story isn't over.

Rocker Boosters: Yeah, but you are not even going to be a part of the new series, do you have a comment on that?

Rich Rider: Hey, look at Iron Man, Cap, heck, even Thor have all had stand ins during their careers, I look at this as an opportunity. I am finally getting this classic superhero story element thrown my way. And honestly, after all that work I had to do during my recent series – LONGEST running of my solo series by the way, I could use a break. Comic story or not, Thanos is not easy to deal with, on or off the stage.

Rocket Boosters: Is it a coincidence that the Nova Corps is possibly coming back because of the all the success the Distinguished Competition has had with their Green Lantern Corps?

Rich Rider: What is a Green Lantern?

{Laughter}

Rich Rider: On a more serious note, I just don't get the comparisons. Novas are soldiers, our initial army mission was simply to protect Xandar. The mission has expanded is all. Those other guys are cops. Big difference. And we look cooler.

Rocket Boosters: Okay, what about the new guy, the one we're seeing in the new Marvel story this summer, do you know anything about this guy?

Rich Rider: Come on fellas, you all know I had to sign a non-disclosure agreement before I walked into this room. No comment. Off the record, I think you'll enjoy his work, but hey, there is only one Rich Rider.

Rocket Boosters: Since you are technically off duty, have you had time to reflect on your career to this point, anything else you wanted to add to your origin?

Rich Rider: Well, you have all seen it. I've really enjoyed the ride so far. I mean how many superheroes get their powers ordering a burger? I'm unique. Costume changes, power losses, cancellations, I just keep coming back. I do have a special shout to Dan Abnett and Andy Lanning, I really think they boosted my career to a level a lot of my critics didn't think would ever happen.

"Really? We're still on this? How many years have I been wearing the new threads?"

Rocket Boosters: Rich, do you like the new costume?

Rich Rider: Really? We're still on this? How many years have I been wearing the new threads? I think I have said it before, this one is a little heavier, but it takes a lot more damage, and have you seen the Bowen statue? I think it looks great it is modern with a literal edge to it. I get the iconic arguments with the old look, I get that, but this new market is tough on everyone, it is good to try new stuff and stay ahead of the curve.

Rocket Boosters: Favorite love interest?

Rich Rider: Personal question. I try to keep what happens in the panels there, and my private life private. Favorite gal to work with though, I can answer that, I think most of you guys can answer that as well, who wouldn't to work with Nita? She is as tough as she is beautiful, and hey, I have to be careful how I phrase this, I don't want Sub-Mariner getting fired up. Lets just say I hope to team up her again.

Rocket Boosters: Favorite career moment so far?

Rich Rider: Well, being lost in space at the moment is certainly not a favorite bit, but you're asking easy questions. I think anytime a hero gets to literally tear Annihilus in half, that is a pretty big deal. I mean, honestly that is something Thor and Hulk would have a tough time with, but I made it look easy.

Rocket Boosters: Then maybe a tougher question is your work with the Avengers…

Rich Rider: Are you going to try to ask me a question about the SECRET Avengers? Again, there is a non-disclosure agreement about the mission there guys. What you got to see in the books is what you get.

Rocket Boosters: But that is just it Rich, you always wanted to be an Avenger and when you finally, finally get the call, you're on a classified team, for one mission and you can't even tell anyone about it.

Rich Rider: Okay, so maybe this is good time for the media to get out there and tell people about that chance. More people need to know, I am ready. I can stand among Earth's Mightiest Heroes.

Rocket Boosters: When you're not lost in space.

Rich Rider: Wow. We're not going to let that one go, are we? Look, just hang in there. I am going to be back. In the meantime, lets see how my new Nova namesake does in the spotlight.

Rocket Boosters: What if he does really well in the story line and his series sells well?

"Wow. We're not going to let that one go, are we? Look, just hang in there. I am going to be back."

Rich Rider: There is no such thing as bad press when it comes to Nova name recognition, what is good for him is good for me, and frankly all of the Novas they decide to tell stories about. This is a good thing. I can wait. I've had to wait for new series more than once, I can do this.

Rocket Boosters: Didn't Jack of Hearts say the same thing? He was also knocked out of the Avengers after finally getting a shot.

Rich Rider: Don't count Jack out forever either. He can handle the adversity.

Rocket Boosters: Can you tell us anything about the often rumored Cosmic Avengers?

Rich Rider: I can't, but I will say I think that it is a natural and I would be a great fit for such a team, should Marvel choose to assemble one. I get along with most of the line-up they would be considering for such a team.

Rocket Boosters: Even Beta-Ray Bill?

Rich Rider: Bill looks weird, talks serious on set, but he's got a great sense of humor.

Rocket Boosters: Any chance of a New Warriors revival?

Rich Rider: If Nita is on that roster, sign me up!

{More laughter}

I hear a lot people suggest that would be a setback for me, but I would love another shot with those guys. They are all great friends. Yes, even Thrash. Sure, Avengers is a step up, I just think people constantly overlook all the good things the Warriors accomplished and potential to save anyone from anything.

Rocket Boosters: Could they take the Avengers?

Rich Rider: It is more about the story than just beating them. I'm all about the good story over action for the sake of action. But yeah, right moment, right time, New Warriors could take the Avengers.

Rocket Boosters: Who you got this summer, Avengers or X-Men?

Rich Rider: AVENGERS! Easiest question ever.

Rocket Boosters: No hint of when you will be back on a regular basis?

Rich Rider: No hints. You guys keep asking the questions and reading the stories, and I will be back. I am faster, stronger and cooler than just about anyone else around, there will always be a demand for that.

Thanks for the interview!

Keep your eyes on the stars, I will return.

Blue Blazes!

[With that, Rich Rider, aka Nova, threw off the trench coat, whispered to his helmet, put it on and flew away…]

THANK YOU SO MUCH, NOVA. IT'S A REAL *HONOR* TO HAVE YOU AS THE SUBJECT OF OUR PILOT EPISODE. OUR STATION MANAGER WAS *THRILLED*.
NO PROBLEM AT ALL. DR. GRUENWALD AT PROJECT: PEGASUS ASKED I HELP OUT HIS FRIEND...,
...AND FORTUNATELY I HAD SOME DOWNTIME.
SO IT WORKED OUT.
THIS SHOULD BE FUN.
YOU'RE *ON* IN 3 -- 2 -- 1 --
NOVA, THIS IS YOUR LIFE!
YOU'RE *KIDDING*, RIGHT?
WPX
PUBLIC ACCESS CHA
KEEPING UPSTATE INFOR

"Nova, This Is Your Life (More or Less)"
Pencils: Kristian Horn
Story: Corey Blake
Inks & Letters: Chris Brandt

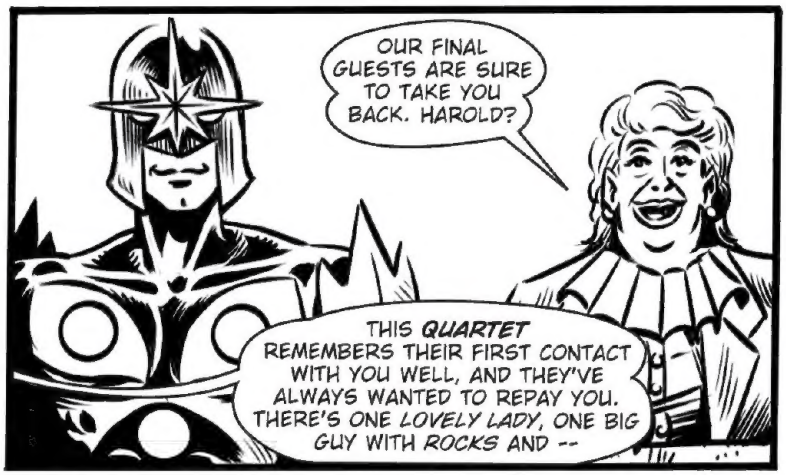
ON AIR
NŌ-VĂ
NOVA, WE ARE SO HONORED TO HAVE YOU HERE!
CLAP CLAP CLAP
UH...GREAT.
TONIGHT, WE'RE TAKING YOU ON A TOUR OF YOUR LIFE, A LIFE THAT HAS TRULY BEEN... A HERO'S JOURNEY.
WOW. REALLY?
I DON'T KNOW WHAT TO -- OOOF!
SNAP
I'M SO SORRY! I GUESS WE'VE NEVER HAD A GUEST THAT WEIGHS SO MUCH. I MEAN, NOT THAT YOU'RE OVERWEIGHT! JUST THAT YOU'RE SO BIG! LIKE WITH MUSCLES! AND YOUR ARMOR!
UH, NO PROBLEM. IT'S OK.
OK, WELL, LET'S GET STARTED, SHALL WE?
YEAH, GOOD IDEA.
GREAT! HAROLD?
NOVA, THE HUMAN ROCKET! TODAY WE PAY TRIBUTE TO YOU BY VISITING THE MOMENTOUS EVENTS THAT MADE YOU THE *HERO* YOU ARE TODAY.
LET ME ASK YOU SOMETHING, NOVA: DOES *THIS VOICE* SOUND FAMILIAR?

HELLO, RICH RIDER. I KNEW YOU ***BEFORE*** YOU WERE NOVA. AND EVEN THEN I KNEW YOU HAD SOMETHING *SPECIAL* IN YOU.
AND YOU HAD A CUTE GIRLFRIEND, TOO. I KIND OF HAD A *CRUSH* ON HER. I MEAN OK, SHE WAS NO DONNA-LEE DOVER, BUT THEN, YOU WERE NO MIKE BURLEY. AM I RIGHT? *HEH-HEH!*
WHAT DO YOU SAY, NOVA?
I... HAVE NO IDEA.
NOVA, THIS IS JIMMY PETERSEN, THE DISHWASHER AT UNCLE FUDGE'S ICE CREAM PARLOR, WHERE YOU SPENT MANY HOURS HANGING OUT WITH YOUR FRIENDS IN YOUR HIGH SCHOOL DAYS.
WHO?
YOU KNOW! JIMMY! SURELY IT HASN'T BEEN *THAT* LONG?
RICH! MY MAN!
I HAVE *NEVER* SEEN THIS MAN BEFORE IN MY LIFE.
HOW COULD YOU NOT ***REMEMBER*** ME? I WAS THERE, MAN. IN THE *KITCHEN*.
I DON'T KNOW WHAT TO TELL YOU, PAL. DID YOU EVER COME *OUT* OF THE KITCHEN? TO ACTUALLY *TALK* TO US?

WELL... I GUESS NOT.
HEH, WELL. UH... OK, NEXT GUEST!
NEXT UP IS A SPECIAL GUEST VIA LIVE SATELLITE.
HELLO, MR. NOVA. REMEMBER THOSE DAYS WITH THE NEW WARRIORS?
REBELLING AGAINST THE GOVERNMENT, SPRAY-PAINTING STARK TOWER... HOO-BOY! GOOD TIMES...
WRONG TEAM.
WHAT? REALLY?
YUP.
I TRIED TO TELL THEM BUT THEY WERE DESPERATE FOR SOMEONE FROM THE NEW WARRIORS.
OK. WE'RE DONE HERE.
WAIT! THERE'S STILL MORE GUESTS!

LOOK, I APPRECIATE THE SENTIMENT. I REALLY DO. BUT COME ON. I HAVE *NEVER* MET ANY OF THESE PEOPLE. THIS JUST ISN'T WORKING.
I KNOW, I'M SORRY. WE REALLY WORKED BUT WE COULDN'T GET ANYONE. BUT THE NEXT GUESTS *PROMISED* ME THEY *KNEW* YOU.

REALLY?
YES! ***PLEASE!***
I GOT TO ADMIT, I'M CURIOUS.


OUR FINAL GUESTS ARE SURE TO TAKE YOU BACK. HAROLD?
THIS ***QUARTET*** REMEMBERS THEIR FIRST CONTACT WITH YOU WELL, AND THEY'VE ALWAYS WANTED TO REPAY YOU. THERE'S ONE *LOVELY LADY*, ONE BIG GUY WITH *ROCKS* AND --

THE FANTASTIC FOUR?! OH MAN, YOU GUYS REALLY HAD ME *GOING* HERE! THIS IS *GREAT!*
LET'S BRING THEM OUT!

NOVA, IT'S YOUR OLD FRIENDS, ***KID QUARRY***, ***SURESHOT***, ***DEADHEAD*** AND ***SKULLCAT***!
SURPRISED, "OLD FRIEND"?

THIS...IS... AMAZING.
ISN'T IT, THOUGH? I'M SO GLAD YOU LIKE IT!
NOT THAT KIND OF AMAZING.
WELL, THE DAY ISN'T A TOTAL LOSS, I GUESS. I GET TO WIPE THE FLOOR WITH YOU LOSERS.
NOT THIS TIME!
FIVE MINUTES LATER...
I'M AFRAID TO ASK, BUT JUST HOW DID YOU FIND YOUR GUESTS?
...CRAIGSLIST.
THE BLUE BLAZING END!

AFTERWORD

I first encountered Nova in a pair of coverless issues of his original 1970s series that came in a package of remaindered comics that I bought at a local drugstore in my youth. Back in the day, certain shady wholesalers would tear off the front covers to return for credit, then sell the rest of the books at a bargain rate rather than destroying them as they were supposed to. The two issues in question - a two-parter featuring the faceless Mega-Man as the villain - were pretty fun, so I started buying the current issues of the series. But that only lasted for a short time, as the title was cancelled shortly thereafter. Back in those days, there weren't any online comics sites, so the average reader (like myself) had no way of knowing that the title had been discontinued. It was just that NOVA #26 never showed up, and eventually those plot threads were wrapped up by Marv Wolfman over in FANTASTIC FOUR.

I first edited Nova when I inherited the NEW WARRIORS line of titles right towards the end of their lifespan in the early 1990s. The boom years of that period were turning to bust, and all of the assorted series extensions that had been able to sustain themselves a few months earlier were now falling on hard times. NIGHT THRASHER was the first book to go, followed shortly thereafter by NOVA, and then finally NEW WARRIORS itself. I had really liked NEW WARRIORS when it launched, surprisingly since it seemed on the surface to be sort of a hack assortment of also-rans collected together as an imitation Teen Titans. But Fabian Nicieza, Mark Bagley and editor Danny Fingeroth were able to give the series a specific flavor and the characters all individual personalities, and it became a special favorite while it was around. It also put Nova back on the map (first as "Kid Nova", since Galactus' herald had co-opted Rich Rider's codename during his enforced retirement.)

In the files I inherited when I took over editorship of NOVA, there were layouts for three chapters of a NOVA serial by Erik Larsen originally intended for MARVEL COMICS PRESENTS. Erik loved the character and wanted to bring him back, but the storyline got squelched when the plans to make Nova a part of NEW WARRIORS materialized. Erik would later rework some of that material in his short-lived NOVA series from the late 1990s, but by then it maybe didn't work as effectively as it would have had it been published when it was conceived; the character had been through too much in the years since to return to those earlier more innocent roots.

I oversaw the transition of Nova from a boy-hero to a man-hero when my Associate Editor Andy Schmidt conceived and pitched the ANNIHILATION project, and positioned Nova at the center of it. Andy and writer Keith Giffen did most of the heavy lifting on it, but I was around to offer my opinions and occasionally keep the story-train on the tracks. I seem to recall that I was the one who suggested doing the introductory issue from Nova's point of view, so as to introduce readers who wouldn't be familiar with him and his backstory to the entirety of his history and environment in a streamlined and natural way. But I could be wrong about that; if Andy disagrees with me, believe his version.

Now, we're on the cusp of an exciting new chapter in the history of the Human Rocket. Not only will Nova be featured in the AVENGERS VS X-MEN mega-event slated to run all through the summer of 2012, but he'll be the star of the first Marvel Infinite Comic, blazing a new trail into the universe of digital media. Nova will also be seen on television for the first time as a regular character in the Marvel-produced ULTIMATE SPIDER-MAN cartoon on the Disney XD channel, which will expose him to a whole new audience entirely. And who knows what the future holds beyond that? Is silver screen stardom out of the question someday?

He's been through a lot over the years, gone through a lot of changes, with more still to come, I'm sure. But the fundamental appeal of the Human Rocket still remains: he's just an ordinary kid from Earth who lucked into extraordinary powers and tries to use them as best he can to help people and his planet. Blue Blazes!

Tom Brevoort